

# Serve InDEED

*September 2020, Volume 7, Number 1*



**THE TENNESSEE JOURNAL OF  
SERVICE-LEARNING & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Edited by: Bill Johnson, Ph.D., Chip Harris, Ed.D., and Terry Silver, Ed.D.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## ServeInDEED

September 2020, Volume 7, Number 1

Papers published in this volume of ServeInDEED have been peer reviewed through processes administered by the journal Editors. Reviews have been conducted by expert referees, who have been requested to provide unbiased and constructive comments aimed, whenever possible, at improving the work. The journal Editors have taken all reasonable steps to ensure the quality of the materials they publish and their decision to accept or reject a paper for publication has been based only on the merits of the work and the relevance to the journal.

Articles that have undergone the peer review process are indicated by the Peer Review symbol.



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ServeInDEED, the Tennessee Journal of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement is a peer-reviewed online journal published annually by Volunteer Tennessee. Special issues are published as needed/ requested. Volunteer Tennessee, an agency of the State of Tennessee, focuses on community service and service-learning initiatives in which citizens of all ages and backgrounds engage in services addressing the educational, public safety, environmental and other human needs of the state and nation. ServeInDEED publishes articles concerned with service-learning and civic engagement. We welcome articles from higher education (peer reviewed), K-12 education, community based organizations, education/community partners and especially students.

Back issues of ServeInDEED can be accessed at: <https://www.tn.gov/volunteer-tennessee/vt-aboutus/vt-publications.html>

### SAVE THE DATE- 2020 Tennessee Conference on Volunteerism and Service-Learning

Page 5

### 2020 Tennessee Conference on Volunteerism and Service-Learning - CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

Page 6

### WORKING TOGETHER: Stories to Inspire Change Agents

Page 15

### SERVICE-LEARNING MARKETING: Cutting Out the Lingo and Targeting the Right Audience to Innovate and Grow

Page 20



### EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SERVICE-LEARNING AND GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPISTS

Page 23



### AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH IN SERVICE-LEARNING AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS THROUGH STEM IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Page 27



### TURN YOUR PASSION INTO ACTION: Disaster Relief

Page 31



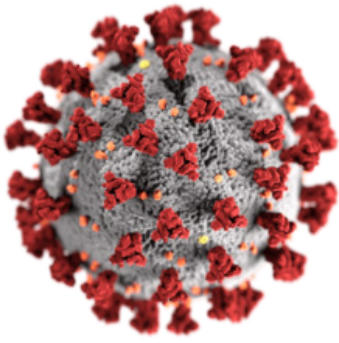
### SAN MIGUEL WORLD CLASS CULTURE AND INTERNATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING

Page 33



### STUDENT PERCEPTIONS ON THE IMPACT OF SERVICE-LEARNING

Page 37



***While the operational environment may have changed, the needs of our communities and partners still remain.***

During the State of Tennessee's response to COVID-19, the Editorial Staff of ServeInDeed is available to help consult on impacts on service-learning and community engagement activities during this uncertain time. Feel free to contact us at *Journal.Serveindeed@gmail.com*, or if you have ideas and suggestions that could benefit the SL community (we would love to include them in an upcoming issue), or if you have questions about how best to continue integrating service-learning activities into your courses.

While it feels as if the educational world is topsy-turvy, it remains important that instructors continue thinking intentionally about designing service-learning activities for Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 that are robust in case some or all instruction is done online. While the operational environment may have changed, the needs of our communities and partners still remain.

#### **PLANNING FOR FALL 2020 SERVICE-LEARNING:**

*While we understand that some instructors might choose not to include a community-engaged aspect to their course this year, we think there are still many compelling pedagogical and service-related reasons to encourage academic service-learning/community-engaged courses for Fall or Spring courses.*

The University of Georgia Office of Service-Learning has posted some options for faculty and agency leaders to consider.

**Option 1:** Build in a community-engaged activity that is “robust” and can be carried out equally readily in case of pivoting to online instruction at some point during the semester. In many cases, that involves prioritizing “indirect” activities for service-learning, or remote/virtual direct service. For instance, many faculty have reported that students who carried out remote activities or deliverables such as developing a nonprofit marketing plan, mentoring youth online, designing a butterfly garden implementation plan, creating virtual campus tours, doing phone check-ins with older adults, creating “translational” educational materials, etc. had minimal or no disruptions during Spring 2020 campus transitions to online-only instruction. Because many non-profits and community partner agencies have also experienced major changes to their operations, it is worth inquiring specifically whether they have newly identified needs that could best be approached remotely (for instance, surveying clients on their food security status; helping promote new program options to agency clients, etc.)

For programs considering remote/virtual direct service activities, such as tutoring kids online, Virginia Commonwealth University has a useful set of guidelines for Online Programs Safety and Protection of Minors Resources to think through. (VCU direct link - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1desXBV8BTpIKioKIOo5cdvkgVOlfWfz6/view>).

**Option 2:** Include an initial direct-service service-learning activity, while building in flexibility for a potential “pivot” to online instruction during the semester. For example, for a course with service-learning tutoring of English learners as the intended activity, the instructor might plan for the following possible modifications: changing over to online or phone-based tutoring upon suspending in-person instructional activities; a potential reduction in the number of hours of tutoring required; or switching mid-stream to a different but still relevant service activity such as developing educational content for the tutoring program’s future use. Similarly, for a course with a food insecurity focus, if a direct-service activity such as food delivery is suspended mid-semester, the course could pivot to having students do regular client wellness checks by phone, could develop video content on home gardening or food preparation, or could develop public relations campaigns about where and how emergency food is available in the community or fundraising initiatives to support these.

**Option 3:** If in-person direct service activities are still the best choice, consult with your department and our office, and the community partner on health and safety guidelines, particularly including the following topics:

- **Partner Needs.** Are the needs of the community partner still the same, or have their operations shifted in ways that require re-thinking the SL activities?
- **Social Distancing.** Will the activity and site allow appropriate social distancing? Is there a need to organize students into smaller shifts at different times, for instance?
- **Transportation.** Will car-pooling be allowed? Will use of public transportation or university vehicles be appropriate or possible?
- **Memoranda of Understanding.** Is there sufficient time and community-partner “bandwidth” to set up required MOUs?
- **Community Partner Requirement.** Beyond the “normal” considerations, will community partners have additional requirements, such as COVID testing, wearing masks or other personal protective equipment, temperature checks, etc.? Are there enhanced protocols for working with partner sites that serve vulnerable populations?
- **Adverse Events.** If the facility has to cease operations temporarily due to a disease outbreak, what impact will that have on your students’ ability to successfully complete their required SL work? If a student is under quarantine, what options will they have to successfully complete their required service-learning/community-engaged course work?

Remember: Critical Reflection is still a vital aspect of service-learning/community-engaged courses and student learning. Regardless of the specifics of how and what community-based activities are actually undertaken, robust reflective activities will help students process, connect, and learn more deeply from these experiences.

Serve Safely,

*Bill, Chip & Terry (the Editors)*

## SAVE THE DATE:



The 2021  
Tennessee  
Conference on  
Volunteerism and  
Service-Learning  
(TCVSL)

February 7-9

The 2021 TENNESSEE CONFERENCE  
ON VOLUNTEERISM and  
SERVICE-LEARNING

**is going virtual!**



Make sure to follow the conference on the TCVSL [Facebook](#) page for regular news and updates.

<https://www.tn.gov/volunteer-tennessee/vt-events/vt-tcvsl.html>

***The 2021 conference will take place as a virtual conference.***

***With the continued uncertainty regarding the safety of large, in-person gatherings, Volunteer Tennessee is transitioning the 2021 Conference to a virtual event, tentatively scheduled for February 7-9. With this decision we are pushing back the opening of the Call for Conference Proposals until later this month.***

***We will miss being together with attendees from across the state, but look forward to still providing a space for service leaders to share knowledge to increase and strengthen service in Tennessee.***

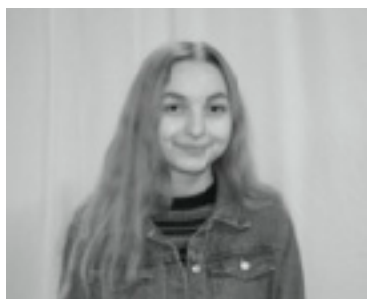


# Tennessee Conference on Volunteerism and Service-Learning

## The Tennessee Conference on Volunteerism and Service-Learning 2020 in Review

The 2020 Tennessee Conference on Volunteerism and Service-Learning was a grand success. Workshops were presented by many strong and experienced Service-Learning and Community Engagements professionals as well as students from across Tennessee. This article recaps the sessions that were presented as a part of the conference. It is a reminder for those who attended the conference and a brief opportunity for those who did not attend to see what you missed. We hope you enjoy this recap and save the date of February 7-9, 2021 for the next Tennessee Conference on Volunteerism and Service-Learning.

This article recaps the sessions that were presented as a part of the conference. It is a reminder for those who attended the conference and a brief opportunity for those who did not attend to see what you missed. We hope you enjoy this recap.



### **Welcome with Allie Duke, Youth Advisor, Nashville After Zone Alliance**

Allie Duke is a junior in high school and serves as NAZA (Nashville After Zone Alliance)'s Youth Advisor. She is the creator of Youth in Action!, a youth-led leadership group of middle and high schoolers. Allie is a Scholastic Silver Key award-winning photographer who enjoys telling stories through her photographs, in the hope that viewers will see things in a different perspective and find connections to their community they might overlook otherwise. She speaks Chinese, tutors refugee youth and hopes to engage with others who are excited about uplifting youth voice in Nashville.

NAZA's Youth in Action initiative is a leadership group of middle and high schoolers taking action in their community. They mentor middle schoolers in Nashville to help them think through issues and develop solutions at the after-school, school, and citywide level. The high schoolers work together with the middle schoolers' ideas (and their own) and implement them more widely alongside adult collaborators on the Youth Matters Committee. While they are in a pilot in North Nashville at the moment, their plan is to build out the initiative to include all of Nashville.

## **Workshop Sessions Presented**

### **Food for Thought about World Hunger & Action Steps for Hosting a Meal-packing Event**

**Benjamin Blahauvietz, Student, Franklin Road Academy**

**Kendall Clark, Student, Franklin Road Academy**

**Brenda Huff, Director of Center for Philanthropic Studies, Geography Teacher, Franklin Road Academy**

In Tennessee, 934,310 people are struggling with hunger - and of them 285,770 are children. 1 in 5 children struggle with hunger. The United Nations estimates that about 815 million people of the 7.6 billion people in the world were suffering from chronic undernourishment in 2016. Participants will become knowledgeable about hunger and food insecurity issues on a city, state, country and national level. They will also learn some possible action-steps that school communities can take to be part of solutions. Presenters will share the AHA! Service Learning Method 1 that breaks down the Service-Learning process (compliments IPARD) into 3 steps: Acquire Knowledge, Hone Understanding and Act! Workshop participants will hear, see, and do!

## **Community Involvement: Steps Toward Creating A Bond With Your Local Area**

**Yenni Gonzalez, Student, University School of Nashville**

**Emma Harris, Student, University School of Nashville**

**Jadyn Sheats, Student, University School of Nashville**

**Lillian Worley, Student, University School of Nashville**

How do you make a difference in the lives of others? Establishing community partnerships can be a phenomenal and rewarding experience. This presentation will focus on how to assess the needs of a community, as well as how to engage an identified demographic. Community involvement requires identifying needs that are essential for a community's well-being. This workshop will help guide students' efforts to organize and create different initiatives in an identified neighborhood. Past, present, and future initiatives at University School of Nashville will be used to demonstrate the process of beginning (and maintaining) relationships within a community. Finally, participants will discuss the significance of community engagement through a question and answer portion, aiming to forge lasting connections between students, schools, and community members.

## **Collaborating For Success**

**Dave Worland, Executive Director, The Governor's Office of Faith Based & Community Initiatives**

**Daniel Henley, Faith Formation and Engagement Director, Agape Means Love (Memphis)**

**Chris Martin, President, Knoxville Leadership Foundation**

"It's a good thing to give a family a turkey at Thanksgiving. . . It's a better thing for them to be able to afford to buy their own turkey." Session attendees will share ideas, hopes, and dreams, and learn how to make better things happen in your community and strategize with leaders across Tennessee about best practices for successful collaborative efforts across the state. Come hear from leaders who are making a difference every day by working with church, community, business, and government leaders to solve problems from poverty to education to children's services to workforce readiness. Participants will learn about leveraging capacity to accomplish better things through strategic partnerships and bring new ideas to the table to solve problems.

## **IPARDE Booster Shot**

**Terry Silver, Associate Professor, University of Tennessee at Martin**

**Chip Harris, Educational Consultant, Service InDEED, LLC**

**Susan Ragsdale, Managing Partner/Author, Write Creations Group, LLC**

Need a "booster shot" on setting up a service-learning project utilizing the IPARDE process? Come to this highly interactive session that will refresh your IPARDE skills! The steps of the service-learning process include Investigation, Planning and Preparation, Action, Reflection, Demonstration/Celebration and Evaluation. The power of service is greatly enhanced when students are actively engaged in all phases of IPARDE. In this session, participants will utilize IPARDE to build projects through Exploding the Issues within a community and Think Tanks to reflect on possible service-learning projects and the sustainability of such projects.



## **Service-Learning Demystified: Practical Tools and Examples for Expanding or Enhancing your Program**

**Tracey Farr, Academic Coordinator for Service-Learning, Pellissippi State Community College**

Service-Learning is a powerful way to engage and transform college students, but in many cases, it seems too daunting or confusing to implement in the classroom. This does not have to be the case if using step-by-step tools and following useful examples to make it work for your class.

## **Intro to TEAM Building and Leadership Skills**

**Brigett Pangkey, Principal, Beacon Academy**

**Skyler Pangkey, Student, Beacon Academy**

**Emma Todosichuk, Student, Beacon Academy**

Middle school and high school students have so much passion and energy. With a little training, teens can become outstanding leaders. This is a hands-on workshop that defines, utilizes, and reflects on leadership principles such as critical thinking, tenacity, self-control, and communication.

## **Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, Who is the Best Leader of Them All?**

**Ethan Harvill, Volunteer Tennessee Board Member and Student at University of Tennessee**

During this workshop, leaders will be able to identify several leadership characteristics, styles, strengths, and be able to apply those to service positions.

By being self-aware, a leader can be a better team member, a better advocate, and better perform for their community. Attendees will go through several small breakout exercises on conflict management, leadership styles, and a traits exercise.

## **No More Boring Debriefs! It's Time to Mix it Up**

**Susan Ragsdale, Managing Partner/Author, Write Creations Group, LLC**

**Ann Saylor, Master Trainer/Author, Write Creations Group, LLC**

Are you the designated person to lead reflection? Are you tired of journal prompts and sit around the circle discussions? Do you want to wow your group with something fresh and new? If you are ready to mix it up, join this session to reflect the Great Group Reflections way. Reflection is THE ingredient that pulls out “aha” realizations from service. Come learn the ins and outs of creating dynamic reflection experiences and see why taking time to reflect is so important. Participants can expect to participate in activities they can easily implement and learn on the spot tips for modifying reflection practices (modeled examples). Presenters challenge attendees to be one of the participants to lead a mini-activity in the session.

Based on the book *Great Group Reflections: 60 Compelling Challenges to Prompt Self-Discovery & Critical Thinking*, this session will leave participants with new ideas sure to inspire change—in how they reflect.

## **Improving Civic Engagement with**

### **Wikipedia: Educating Others as Service-Learning**

**Elizabeth Norell, Assistant Professor, Political Science, Chattanooga State Community College**

**Zachary Burnette, Student, Chattanooga State Community College**

In this workshop, a faculty member and students will demonstrate the potential for using Wikipedia in Education as a way to incorporate service-learning into existing (or slightly modified) research projects. Students become information developers, assisting others in the state who want to become better-informed about their state legislature. In the process, students develop marketable skills, enhance their understanding of information literacy, and gain insight into the ways a changing media landscape make active civic engagement challenging. During the workshop, participants will hear what the project was like for students, common problems and pitfalls, and then brainstorm ways to incorporate Wiki projects into their own courses.

## **My First Book: Helping Students Use Their Talents to Create Books for Children in Need**

**Teresa Todd, French Teacher, Grades 9-12, Ensworth School**

**Dina Marks, English Department Chair, Grades 9-12, Ensworth School**

**Sara Bostwick, Spanish Teacher, Ensworth School**

**Lynn Vincent, Publications, Ensworth School**

**Carrie Cohen, Student, Ensworth School**

**Miranda Marks, Student, Ensworth School**

This session will demonstrate the processes for creating a service-learning project that teaches students to author, illustrate, translate, and use InDesign to create original children's books for those in need. These student-created books increase literacy among disadvantaged children and introduce the magic of owning their first book; at the same time, the students will develop and hone their artistic, writing, linguistic, and technological skills. Session participants will attend stations on the various components necessary for launching a program at their school, such as how to garner interest among students, how to manage student talent, why InDesign, and ways this project can be incorporated into a class. A student panel for questions will be followed by a general question and answer session. Time for reflection and discussion will allow session participants to adapt the program to be used at their own school.

## **Impactful Corporate-Nonprofit Collaboration**

**Stephen Francescon Jr., Community Relations Manager, Piedmont Natural Gas**

**Andrea Hill, Director of Volunteer Memphis, Leadership Memphis**

**Rachael Wall Terrell, Public Affairs Director, CMT**

**Amy Walter, Volunteer & Community Engagement Manager, Cheekwood**

Join this session for an open dialogue between CSR professionals and nonprofits to focus on how both nonprofits and businesses can best collaborate to achieve their goals and have the greatest impact.

This CSR Track session is open to all conference attendees, providing an opportunity for both business and nonprofit attendees to come together and learn about this topic.

## **Special Round Table Discussion: Service-Learning in Middle and Elementary Schools**

**Betty White, Service-Learning Practitioner**

Add a spark to your service-learning program by gathering ideas from like-minded educators and students. Attendees are encouraged to bring a sample or two from their experiences to share, or just listen to others. Have a question or situation to address? Come ask colleagues and students from across the state as we meet to engage in dialogue and interact with other middle and elementary school peers.

Research says that students who begin service at an early age often continue to engage in service activities as teenagers and later pursue service-oriented professions and events as adults. Now is the time to take the next step by reviewing the tenets of service-learning and enhancing our programs.

## **Re-Centering Community: Human-Centered Design as an Innovative Approach to Community Development**

**Melissa Looby, Senior Program Coordinator, Office of Active Citizenship and Service at Vanderbilt University**

**Annie Irankunda, Coping and Resiliency Support Specialist, Catholic Charities of Middle Tennessee**

In the midst of not enough funding, strict regulations, too much work with not enough time or staff, and an ever-changing sociopolitical context, it can be all too easy to lose the authentic voice of the community in your work. In this workshop, participants will be introduced to human-centered design, a unique tool to re-center community in their work, find customized solutions to specific challenges, and how to utilize the process with their teams and volunteers. Using an example community challenge, participants will learn the five steps of human-centered design through a fun and highly interactive boot camp. The workshop will close with a reflection on benefits of human-centered design over traditional community development methods.

## **A Tale of Partnerships and Transformation: SEL, School and Community Partnerships = Socially Engaged Students**

**Penny Willis, Training and Program Development Specialist, Lions Quest Lions Clubs International Foundation**

**Helen Hamilton, Recreation Supervisor - Before and After School Programs Milwaukee Public Schools Department of Recreation and Community Services**

Research demonstrates that service-learning improves civic attitudes and social and emotional skills, as well as promotes social and civic responsibility and academic achievement.

In this interactive workshop, participants will learn how an SEL program, urban school district and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Milwaukee partnered to support students from a high crime, high poverty community develop social and emotional competence and a passion for helping others and improving their communities.

## **Trifecta: Three Class Service-Learning Programs That Support Community and Student Engagement**

### **Kelly Rogers, Associate Professor, Murray State University**

This session will share three unique service-learning programs that bring students together with community partners to create and support positive change. Each of the programs supports the community in unique ways, while providing students with useful learning opportunities. Racer College Day provides 70 eighth graders with a college experience while giving students in event management and program development real planning and leadership experience. The Giving Back Endowment allows students in a grant making course the opportunity to create a Request For Proposals (RFP), create grant criteria and award a grant during the semester. Finally, event management students work with university and community partners to hold a Nonprofit Connections event each semester.

Students gain experience while university and community stakeholders attend the event for the purpose of advocacy, networking, idea generation, volunteer and intern recruitment. All three service-learning programs support student learning and community engagement.

### **Building Student Servant Leaders**

**Justin Barton, Teacher, Volunteer High School**

**Cameron Taylor, Student, Volunteer High School**

**Jackson Bellamy, Student, Volunteer High School**

**Abigail Simpson, Student, Volunteer High School**

Developing strong servant leaders is vital to ensuring service initiatives are completed. In this workshop, participants will hear how a variety of service projects and initiatives are accomplished by students throughout the school and community.

Topics discussed include the importance of training and developing student leaders to be servant-minded, how students are able to plan and complete over 50 different service projects a year, the importance of delegation and organization, and developing relationships with community partners.

### **Service Project with Healing Hands International**

Healing Hands International is a non-profit, humanitarian organization that serves souls in need through clean water programs, agriculture education, empowerment for women, disaster relief, and gifts of love for children. The Disaster Recovery Program through Healing Hands assists families, churches, and communities immediately after a disaster in a variety of ways. One of the most immediate needs are personal hygiene kits, which we will assemble so they can be shipped to those in need as soon as a disaster occurs.

### **How to Fundraise & Friendraise!**

**Andrea Hill, Director of Volunteer Memphis, Leadership Memphis**

During this session, participants will obtain tips on how to fundraise and friendraise for volunteer initiatives. The session will include tips on sponsorships, events management, how to tie it all to employee engagement.

## **One Team. One Dream.**

### **Savannah Jones, Tennessee 4-H All Star Chief and other members of Tennessee 4-H State Council**

Service and service-learning experiences are rewarding experiences, especially when youth and adults collaborate to plan and implement the project. There can be challenges, however, which prevent the project from being as successful as possible. This interactive workshop, led by teen and adult members of the state 4-H council, will provide participants with best practices related to youth/adult partnerships. We will share tips and techniques to help bring the two groups closer together and better position them to function more as a team.

### **Service-Learning at Tennessee State University is a Win-Win-Win-Win Situation. Yours can be too**

**Chip Harris, Ed.D., Educational Consultant, Service InDEED, LLC**

**Carole de Casal, Ed.D., Professor of Educational Leadership, Tennessee State University**

**John Mark Hunter, Ed.D., Professor of Teaching and Learning, Tennessee State University**

**Bill Johnson, Ph.D., Professor and Interim Assistant Dean, College of Health Sciences, Tennessee State University**

**Eric Vogel, Ph. D., Professor of Educational Leadership, Tennessee State University**

**Erik Schmeller, Ph.D., Professor History, Director, Office of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement, Tennessee State University**

Professors at Tennessee State University collaborate with other professors, their students and outside groups as they utilize service as an instructional method in their classes. This workshop will share some of the activities conducted, identify the learning that occurred and explain the four winning components of the projects. In addition, participants will see how easy it is to establish a “WIN4” climate at their institutions that can serve their own institutions as well as internationally.

### **Develop Your Marketing Plan for Your Event, Program, or Organization (Yes, This Includes Media!)**

**Megan McInnis, Executive Director, Doing Good**

Do more people need to know your programs or services? Do you want more people to attend your annual event? Are you re-branding your organization? Or, do you simply want more people to know about your agency? If so, participate in this workshop! Walk in with the idea of what you want to market & walk out with your marketing plan in hand (complete with action items & contacts). Samples, tips, practical suggestions, & fun will be had by all!

### **Service and Service-Learning Edcamp: Be in Charge of Your Own Learning**

**Ann Saylor, Master Trainer/Author, Write Creations Group, LLC**

**Susan Ragsdale, Managing Partner/Author, Write Creations Group, LLC**

You are in the trenches, working in schools and community organizations every day. You know what's working well for you and you have resources to share with others. You also have questions that you would so appreciate getting feedback on. Join us for this un-workshop, an edcamp, where youth and adult participants will share their best strategies and resources with each other in an organic yet purposeful way. Participants will collaboratively determine the session topics we will explore based on what they want to learn. Then we will organize in small group conversations so participants can learn from each other through casual guided conversations. This proven educational strategy is sure to leave you feeling inspired and connected with like-minded colleagues.



## **Scaling Your Organization's Impacts through National Service**

**Jason Scott, Program Director, Knoxville-Knox County CAC**

**Christine Doka, Assistant Program Director, Knoxville-Knox County CAC**

CAC AmeriCorps is an East Tennessee based national service program that has been in continuous operation since 1994. Over the past 4 years, CAC AmeriCorps has experienced over 70% growth in its National Service Intermediary Program growing from 40 AmeriCorps positions, to nearly 70. This means nearly 120,000 hours of service and \$450,000 in education awards benefiting the people and communities we serve. This workshop will provide introductory insights into how intermediary national service systems function, will discuss best practices that make these systems valuable to members and partners, and how to interface with existing intermediary programs to leverage national service resources to increase the scale and scope of your organization's impacts.

## **An Interdisciplinary Approach in Service-Learning and Community Partnership Through STEAM**

**Seok Jeng Jane Lim, Associate Professor, Middle Tennessee State University**

**Karen Reed, Associate professor, Middle Tennessee State University**

**Wytne Theriot, Early Childhood Education student, Middle Tennessee State University**

This workshop will present strategies to equip preservice teachers in planning, implementing and evaluating curriculum using an interdisciplinary approach in service learning and community partnership. Partnering with the University's librarian and Maker Space; preservice teachers learned information literacy skills and integrate technology to create/fabricate prototypes for their lessons on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) initiatives. Implementations of lessons are carried out in the local Boys and Girls Club. With the new knowledge gained, the K-3 children from Boys and Girls Club are invited to the University's Maker Space to witness the actual implementation. Participants attending this workshop will be engaged during the process and provided with opportunities for small group discussion in promoting future interdisciplinary approach in service learning and community partnership.

**The Volunteer Tennessee Award of Excellence program provides an opportunity for K-12 schools to be recognized for outstanding work in the areas of service, service-learning, and volunteerism. Join us as we recognize the following 2019 Award of Excellence recipients:**

- Beacon Academy
- Central Magnet School
- Dover Elementary School
- Ensworth School
- Friendship Christian School
- Jackson Central-Merry Early College High School
- Jefferson County High School
- Johnson County High School
- Lipscomb Academy
- Middle Tennessee Christian School
- South Knoxville Elementary School
- South Pittsburg High School
- Unaka High School
- Union Elementary STEM and Demonstration School
- University School of Nashville
- Whitwell High School

# **Working Together:** ***Stories to Inspire Change Agents***



## **Working Together: Stories to Inspire Change Agents #1**

Write Creations Group has initiated a series of stories that premiered in the fall of 2018. These stories will be reflections of young people and adults about what they have done and what they have learned through serving others. Some of their stories are showcased along with quotes and reflection activities that can be used in your work. We hope you will be inspired and the tools will help make your work fresh and relevant.

Some of the stories of the Working Together series will appear as a regular column in Serve InDEED. Look for the on-going stories in future issues. We hope you enjoy!

*“We shall never know the good that a simple smile can do .” Mother Theresa*



### **Katherine's Story**

My daughter and I along with a friend and his twin daughters decided we were going to go look at this dental clinic in Haiti over spring break and see what we could do. The girls were sophomores in high school. The clinic was located in the back of a high school that is run by the Cathedral of the Incarnation in Nashville, Tennessee.

When we get down there, we were vaccinating children and observing the conditions. All of these people had horrible teeth. There was one girl-she was sixteen-and I took out twelve of her teeth because of gross decay and infection. She had 12 abscessed teeth. It was horrible. Our girls couldn't believe the conditions. "This isn't right. These kids have an opportunity for a great education but their teeth are rotting out of their heads. This community doesn't have any health care; it doesn't have any dental care."

It was right there, right then, at that point that we started Be Happy Haiti. The girls were beside themselves. They couldn't believe what the 16 year-old Haitian girl was going through. They couldn't believe THIS was the way things were. They were determined to change things and provide the care needed.

It's so funny because Wes and I thought, "This is going to be so much work. This is going to be so complicated. The girls just went home and did it."

The girls didn't share our qualms. They didn't know it was going to be hard. They didn't think about where are we going to get the money. They went around to all sorts of groups. They talked to friends. They sold some art. They sold Christmas cards. They raised the money that way (\$30,000 per year).

Our mission is preventative: we do sealings and fluorides and education. Be Happy Haiti now has a local dentist who works there four days a week. Then, when we come down, we do fact-finding missions. We track the kids and identify where the greatest need is for him to prioritize where he needs to focus when he goes to the school.

All of this is because of the girls. That start was in 2011. On my last trip in 2017, we took 31 people and served 2800 children in one week. We have treated over 7000 children since we began.

What I am most proud of...

I like that we're helping educate and bring people back to that community, helping them do things for themselves. It's good for the community. This experience has also been great for my family. I love going with my own girls. And I'm proud of what the original three girls did on their first trip.

But, I'm most thrilled at what happens as I take young people to Haiti. Every single girl that has

been on this trip has been changed. Relationships within the families who go together on the spring break trips change. They learn what they can do and just how much they can do. How they think about the future has changed.

That's what I'm most proud of: how the girls are changed. Their leadership skills come out. Their perspective is changed. Who knows what they'll do next?

Reflection:

Getting a new agency up and running is no easy task! It took work, heart, vision, perseverance, imagination and courage. What would you do if you had been there? How would you have responded?

Explain that you are going to have people take turns summarizing what this story aloud, then ask questions to dig in deeper to what we're taking from this experience of peers; how their efforts might be guiding us.

After the first person retells what happened, ask the group: What strikes you about this experience? What stands out about what was done?

Allow time for people to answer.

Ask another volunteer to run through again what happened in their own words.

Now ask: How does this service project touch your life? How does it impact you?

Allow time for answers.

Have a third person restate the narrative as they understood it.

Ask: How does this good work impact others?

Ask for one last storyteller to recap the account.

Ask: Is this experience asking anything of YOU? Is there something evident for you to do personally? A way you should change? A place you should volunteer your time in or a cause to commit to? Is a new way of giving back asking of you to take action? Is there something else to be learned from this experience? What are you being invited to do in the next 48 hours?

Dr. Katherine Hall has called Nashville home for the last 35 years. She graduated from the University of Tennessee College of Dentistry in 1991. She then completed a residency in advanced general dentistry. Dr. Hall has been practicing in downtown Nashville since 1992 and opened her practice in the historic St. Cloud Corner building in 1998 where she has served residents and business professionals of the greater Nashville area for 20 years. Dr. Hall's experience and expertise can be seen through her many accomplishments, awards, and involvement in the dental community both locally and abroad.

Dr. Hall is the co-founder of the dental clinic in La Vallee, Haiti and consultant to the nonprofit "Be Happy Haiti", that raises money and awareness for the dental clinic in LaVallee, Haiti. Dr. Hall has two daughters, Emma and Isobel. They all three love traveling together to national parks across the country. Dr. Hall is a music lover and frequents music festivals whenever she has the chance. She also enjoys knitting and hiking...but not at the same time! She loves giving her patients a reason to smile!

Find out more:

<http://behappyhaiti.org>

<http://www.katherinehaldds.com/meet-dr-hall/>

*“Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.: -Thomas Edison*



## **Stephen's Story**

My story starts with failure: my own. I was 12 years old and didn't pass the national test that would allow me to go to high school.

I quit school, so I had to go to work with my older brother. Construction work. It was hot, long days. It was hard work. I realized it was not a good job for many people because it was a low-paying job. I would not wish it for my best friend.

I was 13 when I told my mom I wanted to go back to school. I realized that getting an education would allow me to get a better job than moving rocks. I wanted something better for myself and for my family. I was the first one in my family (of nine children) to graduate with a bachelor's degree.

Once back in school, my best friend told me she was dropping out of school and moving in with her boyfriend and not to tell anyone where she was. She ran away. I did not want her to have the kind of experience I had with my construction job. I knew education was important.

One day I decided, "I will change her life." I took her dad to her to bring her home. She was really mad. I told her I missed her and that she needed to get an education.

After she got her degree in Business, she gave me a big hug and said, "Stephen, thank you for changing my life because without you I would not have this degree." That was the first time I realized I could change someone's life.

I have to encourage people to go to school because I see the benefits. It is part of who I am.

So, years later while working on my B.A., I encouraged a police friend to go to university. I told him I would help him study. It took some convincing, but he went. I was so happy because I could help him study. I had had several of the classes he was taking. After a year, he got his certification and was promoted to inspector at work.

For 13 years, he hadn't gotten that promotion. He says he owes that honor to me. "It is because of you that I am where I am."

These are my two friends that I am proud to have helped. Education is important. It can help you have a better life. This I know.



Roughly about 40% fail the Primary School Examination in Belize. I know the feeling when you fail. You feel lost with no sense of purpose. How many children have that same feeling? Like they can't go any further, that this is it?

I always want to be in the teaching profession to change some kids' lives and show them something different. I want to give kids the ability to read. If you can read and comprehend, you can go into any arena.

Reflection:

Stephen talks about overcoming challenges to pursue his education. What challenges do you have with education?

He also decided education was worth everything! What role does education play in your life? How important is it?

Stephen Whyte, from Belize, is the principal of St. John's Memorial Anglican Primary School (Pre-kindergarten to 8th Grade) located in diverse village of Placencia. Being the leader of both staff, students, and an active member of other groups, Mr. Whyte's primary focus is the uplifting of students' achievements in his country through community involvement and targeted instruction. His other focuses include, but are not limited to, teacher efficacy and the integration of novel practices to encourage and address his students' differentiated learning. He is the third person from his country to complete the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship – a Fulbright exchange program for educational leaders at Vanderbilt University. During his Humphrey year, Mr. Whyte explored teacher training and development while simultaneously learning additional new advanced practices to integrate into the teaching curriculum in order to maximize his school's academic performance. He also focused his studies on Literacy and Special Education as he plans to return home in July of 2018 to work with the Ministry of Education and to integrate and Implement the best practices observed into Belize's School Curriculum.

# Service-Learning Marketing: Cutting out the Lingo and Targeting the Right Audience to Innovate and Grow

Tracey Farr  
Pellissippi State Community College

As a business management teacher and someone who worked for 18 years in the non-profit industry, I can tell stories about leveraging resources, the unique challenges of working with volunteers, and the many hats you get to wear in organizations that are often spread thin with regards to personnel, equipment, and the ongoing battle for funding. As my career developed, so did my knowledge and skills for communicating with key stakeholders. If you want money, ask for it and do not dawdle with small talk. If the donation of office stuff is just junk, don't take it...you have enough to handle already.

In a way, it's like administrative boot camp and you either succeed or move on. Set the barriers or be prepared to suffer. As this awareness grew, so did my hot-buttons and one of them is the use of technical jargon or discipline-specific lingo. People assume you know what a 501(c)(3) is because you work for a non-profit (and perhaps you should), but do we need to throw that term around without considering the audience and context? Another hot-button... this is the system we have so we are going to use it. Hmm...do we have to settle for this procedure, or can we innovate, just like any other business can?

When I was asked to be the Academic Coordinator for Service-Learning for Pellissippi State Community College, I had to study the idea and in doing so I spoke to my friends and family.



The story was often the same, my explanation of the role, how it would change my teaching schedule, and so on. After every single conversation with these smart people, they would all ask me the same question with a slight hesitation... "what is Service-Learning?"

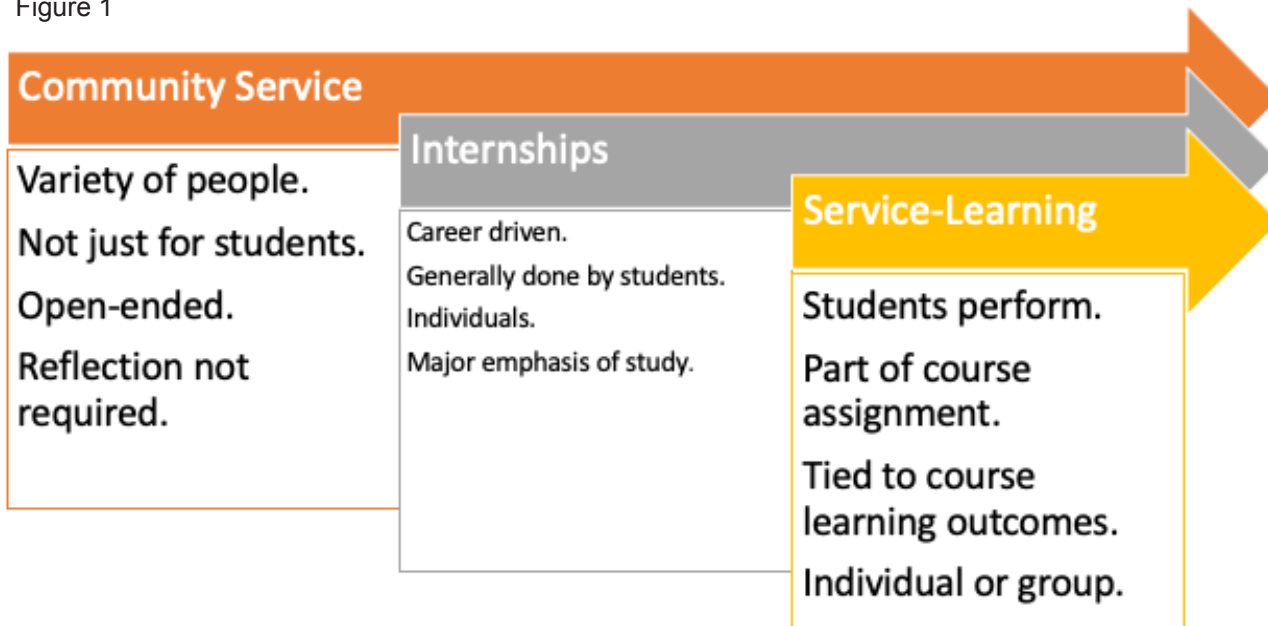
Hot-button pushed! I was using lingo and that's what we have been doing at our school to our faculty and students for a long time. So, my first order of business was to cut out the jargon and define this term with a clear message to the right people.

I had already done the research, having led a webinar earlier that year with a focus on demystifying Service-Learning. The rabbit hole I went down was quite deep and I know we could stay there, but this is where I came up for air, using my own words and terms that I thought our stakeholders could relate to:

- **Assign** - Faculty creates a Service-Learning assignment as part of the course plan with clear links to course learning outcomes.
- **Connect** - Students connect with community partners that have project needs aligned with assignment learning outcomes.
- **Serve** - Students serve with the community partner to meet the assignment objectives.
- **Reflect** - Students reflect on their experiences and share what they learned.

Once I had this language, I started to work with our marketing department to create some art and flyers and update the web site. The first thing our fabulous marketing staff asked me was, "Who is this for?". I had to think for a minute, really, I just need to target faculty with this message. After all, should I be hosting a table at student events or speaking at New Student Orientations about Service-Learning? Well, the answer is no, and not just because I am tired and super busy. My "selling" Service-Learning to students, is like trying to sell them a car before they have been taught to drive. They may not even take a class that offers Service-Learning as an option. Or they may already work in the community and think that is Service-Learning since they are a student who volunteers. My message needs to be focused primarily on faculty and the resources I need to be developing are tools to help them with implementation, tracking, reflections, and project support. This will also help clarify what the community partner stakeholders understand about Service-Learning. For example, if you need 15 students for a one-time fundraising event, that project information can be shared and if it aligns with learning outcomes for our faculty that are offering Service-Learning assignments, they can take it on. If it does not align with a course, then we can certainly promote your need and you will likely get 15 student volunteers, but they won't be doing Service-Learning as it is not linked to an assignment.

Figure 1



Another way I explain it is by making a clear comparison to other programs: See Figure 1 above.

This helps me know how to focus my work and try to persuade more faculty to offer Service-Learning in their courses. I speak of the benefits too and share stories about the transformation we often see in students who learn while serving and this Spring we launched our very first podcast episode (<https://soundcloud.com/user-304568696/pellissippi-state-community-college-service-learning-podcast-episode-1-feb-2020>), featuring a faculty member, student, and their community project partner.

I would love to report that my efforts are driving our numbers up for Service-Learning faculty, but while they are moving in the right direction, we still only have a very small group of faculty that do it. Why? Back to my second hot-button... our procedures seem complicated. This is my next challenge. How can I make faculty see that the implementation is not as hard as they think it is and continue to offer innovative resources?

One way to simplify this process (and this will be our topic for our 2nd podcast episode) is by looking at your master syllabus with me as your resource for brainstorming about which of your learning outcomes you want to focus on and what kind of project would align with them. I did this last fall with one of our adjuncts who taught mechanical engineering. We put our heads together about what his students in his HVAC and fire safety operations-based course could do for our community and then we started pitching the project idea via our major networks through Volunteer East Tennessee (<https://www.volunteere tn.org>) and the Alliance for Better Non-Profits (<https://www.betternonprofits.org>). The students ended up doing facility audits for 9 area non-profits and gave them clear and helpful suggestions to improve their energy savings, address maintenance concerns, and even identified future capital needs. Can you imagine what it would cost the agencies to outsource this project? I was fortunate

enough to be present when the students presented their final project details. These students lit up as they explained finding old windows where cold air was coming in, and at the animal shelter, in the larger dog area, a student team found significant ventilation flow issues.

So, now in addition to pondering how we can make this happen for more students by connecting them with supportive faculty, and connecting like-minded faculty, and then bring them all on board in this High Impact Practice. We need to make sure these students are acknowledged and recognized for their contributions and impact. Also, we assist and encourage the community partners in telling and sharing these stories. We need to make it a habit of reaching them via their social media and leveraging ours.

We also need more tools created like the ones we did this year...super quick screencast videos to explain how to register the projects in our database and a checklist for students to know where to start. We need sample scripts and emails for students to use when they first reach out to a potential community partner on their own. We need to continue to develop our Premier Partnerships with organizations in our area who are deeply connected to the agencies we want to help and will promote our students as skilled volunteer labor that is directly tied to



So with hot-buttons pushed, and my experiences reminding me about the struggles out there, we are going to continue this internal marketing plan for Service-Learning, and focus our outreach to our faculty, to support them with innovation, and ensure an understanding and a clear definition of what service-learning is and how it works for the benefit of all parties. The program mantra going forward is - **ASSIGN—CONNECT—SERVE—REFLECT.**

While the work is daunting, it certainly is worth it. Join me as we teach and serve together.

**Pellissippi State Community College:**  
*<http://www.pstcc.edu/>*

For faculty: <https://sites.pstcc.edu/pace/service-learning/>

Podcast link: <https://soundcloud.com/user-304568696/pellissippi-state-community-college-service-learning-podcast-episode-1-feb-2020>

Our program seeks to engage faculty, students and community partners using this process:

Faculty create a Service-Learning assignment as part of the course plan with clear links to course learning outcomes.

Students connect with community partners that have project needs aligned with assignment learning outcomes.

Students serve with the community partner to meet the assignment objectives.

Students reflect on their experience and share what they learned.



# Exploring the Relationship Between Service-Learning and Training for Group Psychotherapists

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Peer Review

## Introduction

Group psychotherapy is a form of counseling involving multiple clients (members) meeting together while one to two mental health professionals, sometimes referred to as facilitators or leaders, help guide the change process. A primary aspect of group counseling and psychotherapy is interpersonal learning. This allows clients to learn from one another through member to member communication. The facilitator(s) also offers a blend of feedback, questioning, summarizing, reflection, and other insights to individual members as well as the group as a whole. Furthermore, the group moves through the change process via healing factors such as hope, interpersonal learning, catharsis, imitation, imparting information, and group cohesion (Yalom & Leszcz, 2008).

There are multiple types of groups that assist growth. Self help and support groups are relatively common. Typically, they coalesce around a singular shared experience or challenge. Self-help groups focus on people with similar needs, are free-of-charge, and informal. In self-help groups, leaders generally have experience coping with the same challenge and do not need to be trained professionals. Support groups focus on a shared experience related to a life disrupting event and challenges with coping. Group psychotherapy



also includes support and is typically comprised of members that want to learn adaptive strategies to deal with stressors, release feelings and emotions related to disrupting life events, increase strength, and become healthier emotionally. However, group psychotherapy may focus on a global rather than specific topic, leaders are professionally trained, and group interactions are the primary factors that influence change. Furthermore, group psychotherapy is structured around several goals (Yalom & Leszcz, 2008). One goal is to improve emotional and behavioral health. A second goal is to change how the person interacts with others and within group environments (e.g. families and work). A third goal is to aim for corrective emotional experiences which is when unhealthy emotional reactions are replaced with healthier responses and interactions as a result of the therapeutic change process (Knight, 2005).

## Service-Learning

Duncan & Kopperud (2008), define service-learning as a method of teaching and learning that maintains a commitment to the strengths of service while addressing community partners' needs. Simultaneously, service-learning strengthens student education via purposeful reflection and calculated civic action. When participating in service-learning, the student and instructor receive personal exposure into in-depth learning experiences that assist in bridging mutual partnerships between the self and community. These partnerships can foster enhancement

and enrichment for further collaboration between the community and the classroom.

Community-based learning experiences have increased in popularity over the past few years in higher education (Butin, 2010). These experiences encompass community service, volunteerism, internship, and cooperative education. However, what sets service-learning apart from these four examples of community-based learning are the benefits to the servicer and the population being served (Duncan & Kopperud, 2008). When service results in a reciprocal relationship and meets the four objectives of service-learning then, it can be appropriately classified as service-learning.

According to Duncan & Kopperud (2008), the major traits or objectives of service-learning are (1) for students and the instructor to pledge a commitment to community partnership; (2) components for learning and academic rigor; (3) a period of intentional reflective thinking; and (4) for students to practice civic responsibility. The first objective of service-learning, committing to community partnership, requires meaningful acts of service be conducted in community-based settings such as in neighborhoods, on college campuses, within the city limits, and at the local level. Members of these communities share subjective aspects of life such as an SES, culture, principles, nationalities, ability level, physical characteristics, race/ethnicity, etc. (Duncan & Kopperud, 2008). Serving at the local level, in these settings,



allows for the participants to consider community partner issues or areas of growth, reflect on their communities, and learn to appreciate the wider community, holistically.

The second trait, learning and academic rigor, is focused on participants (students) reaching pre-set learning objectives developed by facilitators or group leaders before engaging in service. Example questions from instructors might be, “What should students to learn? How could they participate? What can be learned when participants reach the end of the course?” Or, “What types of service activities can we find for students to engage in that will meet the learning objectives, and highlight the needs of the community?” Service-learning provides students active learning components with the integration of service. Further, academic rigor requires advanced critical thinking skills such as analysis, deductive reasoning, decision-making, problem-solving, conceptualization, and the synthesize of the learning experiences (Duncan & Kopperud, 2008).

The third objective, intentional reflection, is an integral component of service-learning due to its ability to help the participants find meaning from the service experiences by attaching it to the service-learning content and objectives. Practicing reflection allows for the exploration of emotions, feelings, thoughts, fears, narratives, and questions that the participant brings into pre-service. Additionally, post-service-learning, participants can reflect on biases, stereotypes, thoughts, and reactions that typically surface from those experiences to connect or confront the learning objectives and content (Duncan & Kopperud, 2008). Types of intentional reflection are journaling, sharing verbally in class, or any form of healthy expression that assists in making meaning of the service experience.

The final trait of service-learning, practicing civic responsibility, requires participants and facilitators to live and act responsibly. It also involves challenging systemic barriers and injustices that communities face. Social justice and advocacy and proactive engagement in healthy conflict resolution

with hierarchical structures further develops ethical leadership skills (Duncan & Kopperud, 2008).

Service-learning and group psychotherapy share many similarities, such as the inherent experiential components attached to being in a group setting. Moreover, both of these entities serve community members and organizations. Service-learning and group psychotherapy are both interested in moving a particular group towards improvement and intrinsic change among its members. Furthermore, both entities require their participants or members to reach a level of cohesion, stability, and safety to effectively surpass established goals, or identified objectives given by the respective facilitator or instructor. To reach these goals, participants are often required to establish rapport and maintain trust with one another and the facilitator.

## Course Description

The Advanced Group Counseling course focuses upon awareness of the curative factors associated with group counseling and how to mobilize these elements and facilitate the change process. Students participate in a number of learning activities to increase understanding of these components. These activities include video and live observation of groups as well as facilitating a focus group. The purpose of these assignments is to help students identify and recognize healing aspects of the group process, and implement and maintain these aspects within a psychotherapy group. The course also notes that conflict is a natural stage in the group's process of becoming engaged and learning the function and purpose of the group. How to help the group manage and move beyond conflict is also addressed. Furthermore, the course is organized around knowledge, skills, and dispositions/attitudes/(KSDs) that are integral to effective group therapy. Several of the KSDs are: a) Students will understand the process of group development, b) students will understand group dynamics and will apply group counseling methods and skills to the practice of counseling, c) students will design a therapy group that meets the demands of a particular

setting, issue, or purpose and, d) students will identify process and here-and-now issues that emerge in group sessions and discuss ways to facilitate these issues in a therapeutic manner. Additionally, the Advanced Group Psychotherapy course is organized around learning goals. This includes helping students understand the research on group effectiveness and outcomes, examine and critically evaluate cultural variations and their effects on the psychotherapy group, and apply ethical and legal principles to group counseling. Along with the KSDs, the purpose of these goals is to help increase awareness of group dynamics, how members impact one another, and how the group as a whole helps individual members move towards the change each person wants to see in their lives. In part, these goals are achieved by observing open groups and reflecting on the group dynamics that are present. Reading text and articles about the practice, art, and efficacy of group counseling, and engaging in self-reflection about one's experiences observing and facilitating actual psychotherapy groups is also part of the learning process in the course. The next segments of this article focus on the service-learning component of the course and how this activity has helped to cultivate competency in the areas of leading and facilitating group counseling.

## Service-Learning Assignments and Activities

Observing and facilitating group counseling is a standard practice of group counseling courses in general (International Board for the Certification of Group Psychotherapists, 2020). An applied practice model is also a customary aspect of clinical training programs. In the Advanced Group class, the primary tasks of the service learning assignment are to conduct a focus group and attend to the following areas 1) selecting group members, 2) facilitating communication and sharing 3) encouraging appropriate self-disclosure, 4) noticing and managing dynamics such as monopolizing, silence, and/or cross-talk, and 5) moving towards concluding the group in a sensitive and ethical manner.

Prior to engaging in this assignment, students must observe two (2) 'open' groups within the community. Open groups refers to counseling groups which are welcome and open to everyone. Before attending, students are strongly encouraged to contact the group leader, disclose their student status, and ask if it would be appropriate for them to observe the group and whether or not this would be welcomed. Additionally, before following through on the service-learning assignment, students watch videos of the author of the course textbook facilitating group therapy in both outpatient and inpatient settings. Reflections papers and guided assignments are also completed in response to the video and live group observations. A description of the service learning assignment is below.

### ***Assignment from Syllabus:***

**Focus Group & Presentation** will include designing a focus group around a specific topic. Students will work in pairs to design a 1 hour focus group on a topic of choice. Designing the group will include creating selection criteria, an ice breaker, and 3-5 targeted questions to get the group started. The pair will also be responsible for choosing 5-8 people to participate. The focus group must be videotaped and presented in class. A four to six (4-6) page paper (per group) should accompany the presentation. The paper should include the items mentioned above as well as your reactions to the group process and functioning. Although you are free to choose your own topic, you will be given potential subjects and agencies to contact to help guide you in this process. More detail will be explained in class.

## **Learning from the Learners**

A focus group was conducted with several students who have completed the Advanced Group Therapy course at Tennessee State University to assess the learning outcomes of the course. The participants were comprised of alumni and current students in the Counseling Psychology PhD program. The participants had attended two open group therapy sessions for observation

and facilitated a focus group as part of the course requirements. The participants were asked a series of questions related to their experiences in the course and its relationship to service-learning. They also expressed their understanding of the KSAs of the course and how it related to their experiences observing and facilitating a group.

Regarding group development, many of the former students stated that they understood the stages of group development from the theoretical concepts presented in the course. They could identify the saliency of these concepts when examining group dynamics. Moreover, they attended a range of self-help and support groups for at least one (1) of their observations. This allowed them to witness an array of group dynamics including the stages of group development. These students noted that while they could not always discern the stage of group development, when they did, it added to the learning from the course.

Focus group participants also expressed that from observing open support groups in the community, they gained "a picture of what a group should look like". Still, a few said that they "did not see group dynamics" in the observation as they may have only attended one group session. Nonetheless, they were able to "understand the flow of a group in a one-time period since it was so encapsulated".

Students also noticed types of group members, such as silent and monopolist members (Yalom & Leszcz, 2008), and the impact they may have had on the group. The different types of group members present certain advantages and disadvantages to the group that require different counseling methods and skills to be applied by the facilitator. In one group observation a student mentioned that "one person would talk, a little too much"; this could be seen as a monopolist or a person who seems compelled to chatter on incessantly (Yalom & Leszcz, 2008). Another participant stated that "people shared and people were really quiet, and I remembered getting frustrated because the two co-leaders talked about themselves a lot". This also highlights

that the former students were able to notice the leaders' effect on the group dynamics and some opportunities for facilitation.

As mentioned earlier, part of the course required students to host a focus group. This allowed them to practice the skills they learned in the course such as selecting and screening group members, developing a group contract, overseeing the informed consent process, and launching a group. This also gave the students an opportunity to apply counseling methods that would best suit the types of group members they selected. Furthermore, they were able to connect service-learning and group therapy with the concept of learning in a community and learning by doing. The participants stated that the observations and leading a group were good experiences. For them, through service-learning, they wanted to feel as if they were doing something to serve the community. Then returning to class, discussing the experience, and writing about it helped them add further meaning to this experience and how it augmented their learning process.

## **Future Directions**

Pairing service learning and group facilitation opportunities is a helpful way to train mental health professionals to lead counseling and psychotherapy groups. Still, there is room for improvement and further research. With an eye towards social justice and advocacy, one suggestion is for group training opportunities to concentrate on giving back to the community such as hosting groups for members who might not have access to group therapy. These strengthened relationships between training institutions and community agencies and groups could focus on ongoing relationships. Thus, the community would be not abandoned after a group concluded and students would continue to have learning opportunities. These relationships could also be strengthened by instructors maintaining communication with community organizations and inquiring about unmet needs and areas for providing service. Active interventions could

include providing psychoeducation, crisis intervention, and support to community members. These efforts could make service-learning and group counseling and psychotherapy a more comprehensive effort that establishes a longstanding connection to the community.

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# An Interdisciplinary Approach in Service Learning and Community Partnerships through STEM in Higher Education

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## Introduction

To better academically prepare our preservice PreK-3 teachers for career and life, there has been a movement and push towards integrating STEM in Middle Tennessee State University. STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. Integration of STEM concepts into the curriculum is intended to encourage critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration as our students face an increasingly diverse and complex world. The Tennessee Department of Education, under the direction of the STEM Leadership Council, rolled out STEM standards for K-12 education beginning with the 2018-2019 school year. Recommendations included creating new modules that integrate the STEM standards, as well as providing both classroom and externally based hands-on learning opportunities for K-12 students (TN Department of Education, 2018). With this change at the elementary and secondary levels, it was thus imperative that higher education also integrate STEM standards into the curriculum.



One obstacle, however, is that studies have shown that most teacher preparation programs do not have a strong focus on STEM education (Schmidt & Fulton, 2017; DiFrancesca & McIntyre, 2014; Teo & Ke, 2014). Sondergeld, Johnson & Walten (2016) suggested that for impactful and sustainable K-12 STEM education, a partnership model should be adopted. Using this model, we intentionally redesigned a course syllabus to integrate STEM education through a partnership with the MTSU library's Makerspace, as well as a community partnership with our local Boys & Girls Clubs. STEM education lends itself well to using an interdisciplinary approach in combining different disciplines and providing service to community partners.

## Timeline

The timeline for this service learning and community partnership started with planning and course redesign in summer 2019, and implementation in the fall 2019 semester.

### *Summer 2019 (Course redesign and seeking partnerships)*

The course at the center of this project was ECE 4370: Effective Instruction. This class is an in-depth study equipping early childhood educators with experience in planning, implementing, and evaluating the programs and curriculum used with young children in their natural educational environments. The foundations for this course are developmentally appropriate practices in children's settings that are inclusive and diverse. The final project of the course involves applying the knowledge

acquired during the semester to planning and delivering a classroom lesson for K-3 children in a local elementary school.

As part of the course redesign, several STEM-centered enhancements were made. It was decided that an essential component of the lesson delivery would be a student-created manipulative or teaching tool produced in the library's Makerspace. Walker Library's Education Librarian was asked to help students get ideas for this task by demonstrating various teaching manipulatives found in the library's specialized Curriculum library, as well as showing students various lesson planning resources. Creation of the teaching tool and deployment of the lesson would be the culmination of students' newly-honed library skills.

The vision of the Makerspace, housed in MTSU's Walker Library, is to provide an active learning experience for students by using the various equipment that enables creation or fabrication of prototypes. Although some of the equipment includes computers and peripherals such as a scanners, microphones, and printers, other Makerspace equipment such as filament 3D printers, Makeblock kits (a construction set), oscilloscopes, or virtual reality (VR) equipment allows for a far greater range of exploration. Working in partnership with the library's Education Librarian, dates were set in fall 2019 to ensure that students could be trained in time to use the equipment prior to production of the teaching tool.

At the same time, the instructor for ECE 4370 wanted to ensure that the experiential learning component was ingrained in the course syllabus. She

sought a collaborative partnership with the local Boys & Girls Clubs due to their role as a provider of afterschool and summer programs for children and youth. The Boys & Girls Clubs of Rutherford County (TN) was chosen due to their close proximity to the MTSU campus. This location would ensure that the preservice teachers could work with the Club's children and then get back to their classes on campus on time.

**Fall 2019 (Implementation)**

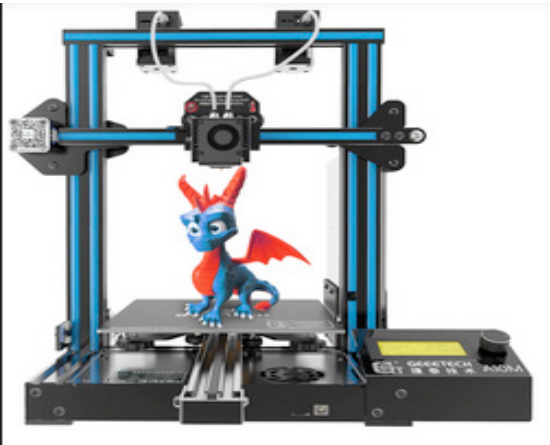
During the fall 2019 semester, preservice teachers gained knowledge in planning, implementing and evaluating curriculum using an interdisciplinary approach integrating STEM education. They signed up for training at the library's Makerspace, and later worked in pairs to build prototypes for their lessons on STEM standards. They visited the Boys & Girls Clubs of Rutherford County to implement their planned lessons. The culmination of the course was to invite the children from the Boys & Girls Clubs to visit the library's Makerspace and witness the creation of the prototypes used in the small group lessons. The course's final assignment asked the preservice teachers to create an e-portfolio connecting their experiences and interdisciplinary knowledge, as well as the impact of their service learning as a preservice teacher.

**Student Reflection**

This whole experience taught the preservice teachers many valuable skills such as the new knowledge gained of Makerspace (Table 1); using an interdisciplinary approach in integrating their knowledge (Table 2) and bridging theory into practice (Table 3). The following three tables highlight some of the reflections these preservice teachers went through in the fall semester.

**Table 1**  
Student Perceptions Regarding Knowledge of the Makerspace at MTSU Walker Library

Before	After
My knowledge was 0. I didn't even know we had such machines on campus.	I now know there are many different forms of technology and that they can be used to teach students and develop hands on methods as well. I will apply this in the future by using the machines if my school has them and showing my students that they can be part of creating items, and they too one day could create machines like that.
My knowledge of the Makerspace at the MTSU Walker Library prior to the training was very minimal. I knew of it since I had seen it on the second floor of the library before, but before the training I had never actually gone into the Makerspace before. I knew it was full of all different sorts of technology, but didn't know what they were and their functions. Overall, going into the training I hardly knew much at all.	Now, after attending the Makerspace training I was pleasantly surprised to see all of the different types of equipment that they had to offer for MTSU students. It was interesting to see all that they had there. For instance, the 3D filament printer, laser etcher, vinyl cutter, 3D resin printer, and more. I liked seeing how different they all were from each other and ways you can be creative with each one. When I did the 3D filament printer training, I learned a lot more than expected. When printing different models, the larger the object is the longer it will take to complete. Most will take hours to print out due to size and complexity. When making a model on the 3D printer, you have to be precise with every action you input into the computer. It was a lot more complex than expected. I can apply the information I learned from the Makerspace in my future classroom. I can encourage the use of technology since that generation of students will be growing in an even more advanced world of technology. Implementing what I can make from technology into a lesson can encourage my future students to want to do that and learn from me.





**Table 2**  
 Student Perceptions Regarding Integration of Knowledge from the Makerspace, Classroom Instruction, and Boys & Girls Club Experience

STEM is a very popular and growing field that has now expanded into curriculums in early childhood education. It was good knowing in what ways was effective to teach younger children the skills and knowledge of STEM. Through Makerspace, I was able to bring a creation of my own from Makerspace for my students. I was able to include technology in the lesson and how things can be created from it. It was also great that they were able to come to Makerspace to actually see the machine I used and how it works. Through classroom instruction, it enhanced my learning of how to teach effectively. Prior to the visit at the Boys and Girls, I was able to learn more ways to instruct children. This included better ways of saying things, preparation for alternatives, understanding a child’s view of learning, what affects their learning, and much more. When it was time to teach the lesson, I able to do these things effectively and how the knowledge of these things help children learn.

I used a book about the lightbulb and Thomas Edison for my lesson about lightbulbs. The book had information on Thomas Edison, the inventor, and had pictures of the first models of the lightbulb. Makerspace was helpful in the creating of a 3D printed lightbulb used as the hook of the lesson. The laser cutter was also used to etch lightbulbs on a coaster and a smaller round piece of wood. Those pieces were also used for the hook of the lesson. There was also a worksheet acquired from a different book in the Curriculum Collection used as an assessment. Students were given a concept map to test their knowledge about lightbulbs before and after the lesson was taught.

**Table 3**  
 Student Perceptions Regarding Integration of Boys & Girls Club Experience with Coursework

Working with the children in the Boys and Girls club aided what I have learned in the MTSU community thus far. I have only experienced working with school children in a school setting or a daycare, this gave me an experience with an afterschool club program. I also had the opportunity to work with a small group in comparison to a whole class, which was a new experience for me. This was a valuable experience that I have not had before. This gave me an outlook on interactions with students outside of a traditional school setting with a class. This was a beneficial experience; it was something I needed to experience to strengthen my teaching strategies.

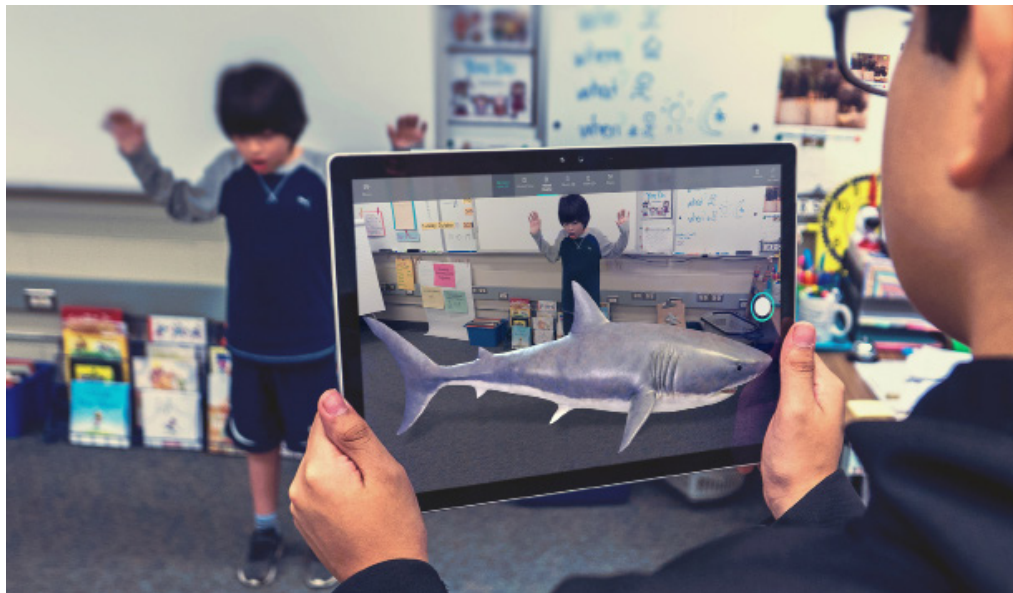
Working with the children from the Boys and Girls club was a great way to get us engaged in the community. We made our lesson, created pieces from the Makerspace, used materials from the Curriculum Collection, and taught it. We also learned that it is completely and 100% okay to modify the lesson as needed to better suit the students. That is definitely something that we had to do that day because our students didn’t seem at all interested in what we were trying to teach them. We modified our lesson and changed our plans on the spot. In the end, it all turned out better than we expected. MTSU taught us to be flexible with our lessons and that what matters is the student. If we had followed the lesson plan the way we had planned it, those students wouldn’t have learned much from us. Thanks to what MTSU has taught us, we were able to improvise and tailor our lesson to benefit them.

## Conclusion

To ensure that our nation is equipped with the skills and knowledge of the high demand STEM-related careers, it is imperative that higher education take the lead in preparing preservice teachers. University educators need to show explicit connections in our syllabi in which we integrate STEM education into the curriculum; additionally, we need to seek opportunities for partnerships with community members and across disciplines. In this way, we are modeling for the preservice teachers what they can achieve when they are in their future diverse classrooms of K-12 students.

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# TURN YOUR PASSION INTO ACTION



By McKenna Britt  
Beacon Academy

On April 27, 2011, I was introduced to disaster relief when an EF4 tornado hit less than half a mile away from my home in Ringgold, Georgia. I was only eight years old and I still remember the feeling of not knowing if we were safe and the uncertainty of our near future. Throughout that day my family had been watching the storm systems that were coming through, but little did we know the severity of the storms. That night after retreating to our basement, I remember my mom going through our church directory to call as many people as she could to check on them. Everyone we called was safe except for one family whose house had been destroyed. At the time I did not realize it, but my life was about to change, and I would become a volunteer for the rest of my life.

The next morning, we expected to see trees down all over our property, but by the grace of God, there was only a tiny tree limb and pine needles. As my dad loaded up chainsaws and our Ford backhoe, my mom took my younger brother and me to a relative's house until they could assess the damage. Unfortunately, my aunt had other plans, which were to go out and "sightsee". I tried to explain to her that the whole reason for her watching us was to protect us from the ungodly devastation that had taken place. However, she loaded us up in her truck, and off we went. As we drove through Apison, Tennessee, I remember seeing people attempting to salvage anything and everything they possibly could. The trees were no longer standing tall and proud but snapped in half and resembled toothpicks. The best way to describe how everything looked would be to say a bomb had been dropped.

For several weeks we helped the family from our church whose house had been destroyed. Then my dad received a call from a friend that told us that another friend's house had been hit also. So, we packed up all of our heavy equipment and showed up at his house one Saturday afternoon. I still remember the family yelling with excitement as we pulled into their driveway with a backhoe and bobcat.

Through the process of cleaning up after that tornado, I had the opportunity of meeting some of the best people in the world. They are now my second family and I have made lifelong friends. I never realized how much I would need them in my future and how much they impacted me until years later. Through the tornado of 2011, I had the privilege of meeting Jojo Macatiag who was a volunteer and became a leader in the Apison community. He became an older brother to me and has helped me to become the person I am today. My family also became great friends with a couple we met from California who started a nonprofit organization that helps all over the United States with natural disasters. They became like second grandparents to me. Through the Dogwood Charitable Foundation, my family has been able to partner with Team Rubicon which is a worldwide disaster relief organization for former military veterans.

In 2012, my family responded to the tornadoes in Harrison, Tennessee. In 2013 we responded to Adairsville, Georgia and later that year my dad responded to Moore Oklahoma, where one week into the clean up his group was literally being chased by another tornado. Since then, my family has responded to Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia,

Louisiana, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and West Virginia.

In 2017, I had the opportunity through my school Beacon Academy, to become CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) trained. After a week of extreme intensive training, I passed my test and was CERT and FEMA certified. I also received First Aid and CPR training. I am certified to go in with first responders and help with light search and rescue, perform first aid on any individual that may need it, and debris removal.

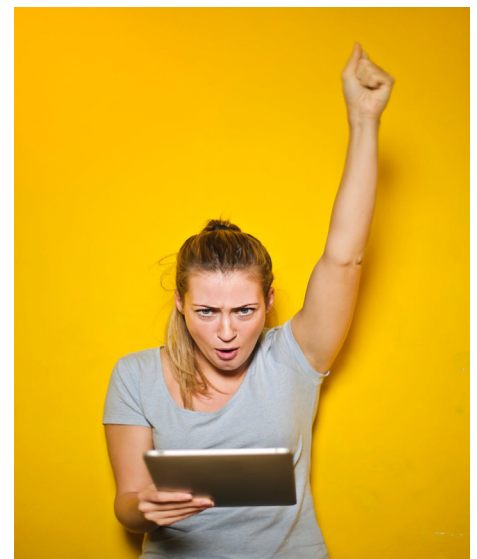
On October 18, 2018, Hurricane Michael hit Panama City, Florida. My school responded with another volunteer group called "To Serve." We were the first volunteer group allowed to enter in and start debris removal, set up shelters, and start-up PODs (Points of Distribution). I remember the first night we arrived, we slept outside in a parking lot at a church and all you could hear were generators running and power crews working. As I lay there under the stars, Lifeforce was still airlifting people out and they were flying over us all night. It was truly one of the most vivid nights of my life. There was a day that I was doing debris removal and I moved a tree branch and looked down and saw a page out of a hymnal. I picked up the page and turned it over and the song talked about how God is with us through the hardest storms and that truly impacted me in a spiritual way.

The most recent disaster that I have responded to was a tornado that hit Chattanooga, Collegedale, and Ooltewah, Tennessee on April 12, 2020. A lot of sleepless nights and sweat-filled days are not foreign to me. Even though each disaster is devastating, it gives me a way to share Christ in my community by helping. I have and never will expect anything in return for anything I do, because that's not why I am out there. I am there to help someone in need and it truly is amazing how God can work. Over the years I have learned how to interact with individuals that have been affected by disasters and sometimes you can't relate to how they are feeling emotionally, but just the fact that you are willing to listen to them and offer to pray with them is more meaningful than anything else you could do.

I intend on volunteering and responding for as long as I am able. Even though I am helping others, in a way it helps me too. My parents have taught me that if you can help someone do it because you never know how much they might need it. Even though I am only 17 years old, I want to help my community and country as much as I can. And in everything I do I give the glory to God because without Him, I wouldn't be able to help people the way I do.



Nashville, 2020





# San Miguel World Class Culture and International Service-Learning



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During the summer of 2019, six students and two professors from Tennessee State University travelled to San Miguel de Allende, Mexico for service-learning projects with six local schools. The students who participated were all studying Education, either working on initial licensure, administrative licensure or speech/language pathology credentials. The undergraduate students were also preparing for English as a Second Language (ESL) certification. The faculty who accompanied the students were an Assistant Professor in Teaching and Learning and a Full Professor in Educational Leadership. All the students were enrolled in a class that met throughout the trip. The undergraduate students were enrolled in EDCI 3300, Foundations of Teaching English as a Second Language and the graduate students took EDCI 5300 Multicultural Education. The graduate students were also able to take an independent study course.

Tennessee State University does not restrict the countries that faculty can visit with educational trips. For this trip, Mexico was selected for several reasons. The lead faculty member had taken students to San Miguel previously, and thus was familiar with the area, the schools, and their needs. The other faculty member attended a university in Mexico, taught graduate school in Mexico, speaks fluent Spanish, and thus was familiar with the customs, language and the school systems in Mexico. Perhaps, most importantly, an increasing



number of students who have Spanish as a first language are moving into the Nashville area. Therefore, there is a strong need in the schools, both public, charter and private for teachers who are familiar with the culture and possess ESL methodology to serve the needs of these students and their families.

San Miguel is a city that manages to be both quaint and cosmopolitan at the same time. Once an important stop on the silver route between Zacatecas and Mexico City, its historic center is filled with well-preserved buildings from the 17th and 18th centuries. With its narrow cobblestone streets, leafy courtyards, fine architectural details and sumptuous interiors, San Miguel is arguably one of the prettiest towns in Mexico (Kevin and Amanda, 2020). In 2008 San Miguel was recognized as a world heritage of humanity site (Zeldovich, L. 2018). More recently, for two years in a row, San Miguel has been named the best city in the world (Dimma, S. 2018). It is a perfect location to introduce the American



*Murals are often seen on the outside of buildings*



*Hotel where the team stayed in San Miguel*



*The Cathedral Basilica of Queen of Peace (Spanish: Catedral-Basílica Reina de la Paz), also called San Miguel Cathedral, is a Catholic church located in the city of San Miguel, El Salvador.*



students to the significant Mexican history and the arts.

The schools visited on the trip represented both those within the city and in the countryside. The variety of schools was chosen very specifically to give the students a broad perspective and understanding of the educational opportunities available to local students. The schools in the city included an international art institute, a university, a school for the deaf and an international bilingual school. The schools outside of the city were a rural primary school and a K-6 elementary school that was closer to the city than the primary school. The point was to represent a broad spectrum of the educational offerings in the area. Different activities were planned for each individual school visited. The TSU students developed the activities that were used, based upon the school's location and focus. To ensure the materials and supplies were available for use, the TSU delegation assembled everything in Nashville and transported the supplies to Mexico. The delegation visited for one day at each school and upon their departure all the materials and supplies developed for that school's activities were left for the schools' use.

Of the six TSU students who participated, four were seeking initial teacher licensure and two were graduate students, one in Educational Leadership and the other in Speech/Language Pathology. The initial licensure students were seeking endorsements in elementary education. None of the students had visited a school of any level outside of the United States. Thus, the spectrum of schools visited in Mexico provided an understanding of diverse intercultural educational experiences.

At the rural primary schools, the parents were involved in their children's activities. Additionally, there are no kitchens in the rural schools, so the parents prepare food at home and bring it to the schools. They collaborate and bring food to create a meal for the students, faculty and staff. In addition to the food, parents were in the schools all day and participated with their children in the activities provided by the TSU students. The parental participation in the rural settings was particularly valuable as the TSU students not only supported the children but showed the parents how they could

assist their children with their studies, personal interactions, playtime, teamwork opportunities and social experiences.

Months were spent in preparation for departure to Mexico. Students were self-identified. Notice was posted on the TSU student information system and the students applied for acceptance. Faculty reviewed the applicant's transcript for classes completed and GPA. Not all students who applied were invited to participate as some did not meet the minimum qualifications. Once the participants were identified, preparations included workshops in basic Spanish language concepts, how to shop in the markets, clothing requirements, weather conditions, hydration and expectations for behavior and safety. Meetings were held to share what everyone needed to pack and what they were not to bring. Zoom sessions were held with the host institution in Mexico to discuss the nature of the schools to be visited, e.g. rural vs urban, private vs public, etc. Discussions included plans for activities at each individual school, preparation and expectations for parental involvement and cultural awareness of the area.

Students were exposed to a spectrum of the education system in Mexico. Mexico currently has stable and growing public school and university systems nationwide. The system has increased in both stability and quality for all students in recent years. Public schools are well funded in urban areas and attendance is mandatory until the age of 18. Preschool is optional and is available for children starting at the age of three. Schooling is mandatory from the age of six to eighteen throughout the



*TSU team making final lesson preparations*

country.

Schools in rural areas are not as well funded as the urban schools. Schools in rural areas still struggle to garner the funding to provide for basic educational needs. Some schools are so poor that they cannot provide running water or indoor bathrooms.

Attendance at university is possible for students living in the cities but not always possible for the more rural students. The rural families are often so poor that the children need to work once they finish high school to help support their families. The reality is that much of the Mexican population lives in nonurban areas that lack infrastructure to support the schools and provide adequate education through high school graduation.

Public schooling is free for grades 1-12 in Mexico, but students must purchase books and supplies to attend the schools. There is no transportation system available in rural areas, leaving some children to walk more than five (5) miles a day each way to school. In addition to public schools, the Mexico educational system offers a number of private school options and a growing number of international schools. Parents who opt to send their children to private or international schools can expect to pay additional for tuition, transportation and food. However, an increasing number of students are graduating from high school and progressing to universities or trade schools as international opportunities for work present themselves.

At the two rural schools, the activities with the students centered around outside physical education. Rural schools have significantly more outside space for playground and sports activities than those in the cities. Since one of the students on the trip was a coach, the activities were well organized to include the involvement of both the children and their parents. The Mexicans understood the sports (usually baseball or soccer) but did not have access to the sports equipment (e.g. balls, bats, frisbees, goals) or the opportunity to fully play the games. Several of the parents who participated learned how to involve themselves in games and playtime to improve their child's educational activities and social lives.



*Getting ready for an outside game*



*Final instructions for the game*



*TSU team reviewing the rules of the game*



*Game in progress*

At two additional schools, both in the city, activities were more centered around arts and crafts due to the lack of playground or sports spaces. At one of the schools, TSU students assisted the children in making plaster masks of their own faces. The TSU cadre went back two days later when the masks were dry and assisted the students in painting their masks. Masks play an important role in Mexican culture and the students were able to paint their masks into whatever real or mythical symbol they chose. At the school for the deaf, the children worked with clay and made whatever type of pottery object they desired. Again, once the pottery items were dry the TSU cadre



*TSU student assisting a child in making a mask*

assisted with painting the clay objects. In addition to their work in the multiple schools in and around San Miguel, the TSU cadre had the opportunity to enhance their knowledge of the geography, history, culture, language, etc. of this area of Mexico. These opportunities included a trip to Guanajuato to visit the University of Guanajuato, the Diego Rivera Museum, the Teatro Juarez, a pyramid ruin and a Mexican pottery factory as well as other historical sites. The TSU cadre was invited to make jewelry and observe local weaving at the Instituto de Allende in San Miguel. The cadre had the opportunity to observe a parade for the Dia de Los Locos as well as attend an international jazz concert, venture into underground silver mines and shop in the local markets. With each of these opportunities they developed a deeper understanding of the history of this part of



*Parade for the Dia de Los Locos*



*Observing the weaving process*





*TSU students presenting at the University of Guanajuato*

Over and above the benefits gained by the Mexican nationals who participated in various aspects of this project, those who benefitted the most were the Tennessee State University students and faculty who were a part of this excursion. The activities were designed and developed by the TSU students with the assistance of the faculty with the sponsorship of the host, Instituto de Allende. The TSU group visited schools as well as numerous historical and cultural sites to learn about the people they met as well as their incredible heritage. The future teachers and school administrators in this group now have a deeper understanding of the Mexican culture, history, and language. These future educators are thus much better prepared to serve the growing number of students from Mexican heritage who are entering school in Middle Tennessee.

Mexico.

This article presented information on an international opportunity for service-learning. Increasingly, universities in Tennessee are encouraging students to reach out across the globe to enhance not only their international but their educational knowledge for service to others. These opportunities provided the students with deeper experiences to not just interact with the communities and schools, but to better understand other cultures and the opportunities that may await them in other lands as an international teacher.

International trips offer further understanding of world peace, deep heritage of the countries visited, historical and current cultural understandings while also offering service opportunities. The Tennessee State delegation provided service to Mexican urban and rural students in a variety of school settings. Beyond the individual students, service was provided to parents, teachers, and administrators. Well over 100 individuals were served in this service-learning project alone. Further, benefits were enjoyed by personnel at the Instituto de Allende in San Miguel, the sponsor and host of this trip as well as numerous employees at the cultural sites visited.

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# Student Perceptions on the Impact of Service-Learning



Peer Review

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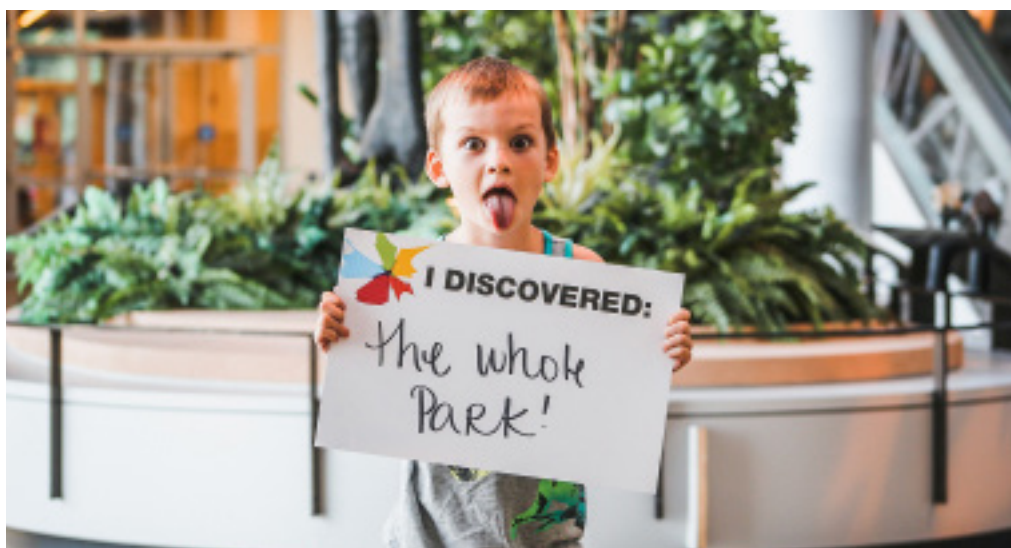
## Abstract

Service-Learning used as an Instructional Strategy has been shown to be a high-impact practice (Silver & Harris, 2015; Butin, D.W. 2010; Fink, L.D. 2016; and Prokopy, Williams, Bowling & Thompson, 2014). A high impact practice is one in which deep student learning promotes high student engagement in the content or subject (Kuh & O'Donnell, K., 2013). Through a SoTL (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning) project, the author sought to identify student perceptions of the impact of service-learning. In this study, students were administered pre/post surveys regarding their perceptions of impact before and after completing 30 hours of service-learning projects during one semester. Results clearly indicate significant differences in perceptions of students on the impact of service-learning in the areas of subject matter integration, community engagement and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies

## Introduction

*"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others"*  
~Gandhi

David Kolb published his learning styles model in 1984 which detailed an experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984). His theory connected experiences with reflection as crucial for the development of new concepts and deep learning.



Earlier in the 1930's, Dewey advocated for an American educational system that would respect all sources of experience (The Kappa Delta Pi Lectures Series, 1938). Experiential learning is defined by the careful selection of activities or experiences which prompt critically thinking and reflection by students (Gass, Gillis, & Russell, 2012). Service-Learning then is a form of experiential learning and adds the elements of (IPARDE) Investigation, Preparation, Action, Reflection, Demonstration & Evaluation (Silver & Harris, 2017). Service-Learning has begun to emerge as a high impact practice for classrooms Prek-16+ and advocated across all grade levels. It is known that high impact practices increase deep student learning and engagement for the student. But what does the student perceive in terms of impact of engaging in service-learning within a course? In this study, it was hypothesized that students in a college course did not perceive any or perceived little impact on their own learning and engagement while engaging in 30 hours of service-learning to meet course outcomes.

## Brief Review of Literature

Kuh & O'Donnell, (2013) established the specifications for what would be termed "high impact practices". Those specifications were "achievement of deep learning, significant engagement gains, and positive differential impact on historically underserved student populations" (Kuh & O'Donnell, 2013, p.21). In his research, he outlined the following activities that research suggests increase student retention and student engagement:

### Activities that Research Suggests Increase Student Retention and Student Engagement:

- 1) First-Year Seminars & Experiences
- 2) Common Intellectual Experiences
- 3) Learning Communities
- 4) Writing-Intensive Courses
- 5) Collaborative Assignments & Projects
- 6) Undergraduate Research
- 7) Diversity/Global Learning
- 8) Service-Learning, Community-Based Learning
- 9) Internships
- 10) Capstone

## Courses & Projects

The nature of the high impact activities puts students in circumstances that essentially require interaction with faculty, peers and community members about substantive matters usually over an extended period of time. Participating in one or more of the activities increase the chance that students will have contact with people and situations different from themselves and resulting in a diverse experience. These experiences often challenge students to think in ways outside of their own, respond to situations by collaborating with different viewpoints and coming to solutions.

One practice identified by Kuh (2013) is service-learning. Service-learning is built on intentional service experiences which align with and help meet course objectives and goals while addressing identified community needs. It is hands



on practical learning. It is one way in which students can develop collaborative and mutually beneficial partnerships to address community needs and learning goals (Silver & Harris, 2017). Service-Learning is more than just civic engagement in one's own community. It is developed carefully with a community partner with clear expectations for both parties. Service-learning is best practiced while following the IPARDE process to create, experience, reflect and assess an actual Service-Learning project. In addition, there are eight quality standards to be met to ensure thoughtful and intentional implementation. Carefully following the eight standards will create a truly reflective and meaningful experience for all involved.

## Methods

University of Tennessee at Martin students enrolled in Honors 200 Topics in Honors were introduced to the instructional strategy of Service-Learning. Honors 200 is one of the classes all Honors students had as an elective option. The class comprised of all different majors including Mechanical Engineering, Agriculture Communications, Geosciences-Geology, Agriculture Engineering, Wildlife Science, Animal Science, Exercise Science and Wellness, Nursing, Management, Animal Science: Veterinary, Criminal Justice: Forensic Science, Organismal Biology, Electrical Engineering, and History. There were 24

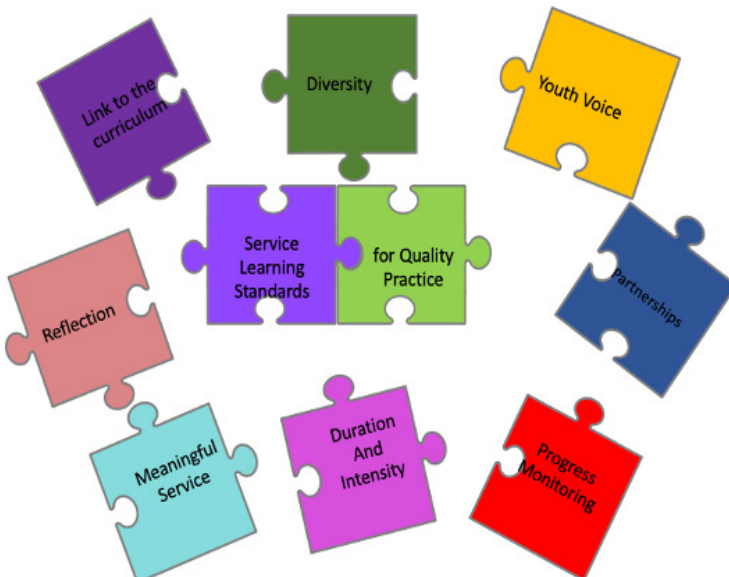
students including 14 females and 10 males and 11 classified as a Sophomore and 13 as Juniors. The first class meeting began with community building exercises which helped the class form bonds and created a relaxed environment with which to collaborate in decision making. Those activities can be found in a former article "Getting Ready for Service-Learning: Discovery Park of America and Honors 200 (Silver, 2018). After the community-building activities students were asked to reflect on their experiences and make some commitments for the project. Examples of some commitments included:

***Broaden my abilities and interests  
To improve critical reading and writing skills  
I want to learn to be more of a listener  
Develop social skills***

At the second-class meeting, students were introduced to Mrs. Polly Brashner from Discovery Park of America. She did a short PowerPoint presentation which shared all of the potential partnerships available for the project. Some examples of possible partnerships included working with Nature's Ninjas, Grounds, Guest Services, Anti-Smoking program, Saturday Morning Science, Stargazing Program, Read Across American and Cleaning. Next, students were interviewed in groups of six by two staff members from Discovery Park. In those interviews, students were asked questions about their knowledge of Discovery Park and what talents they would bring if chosen to serve. They were also asked questions about their perceptions of their own successes and failures. Lastly, they were asked a very specific question: When is it okay to go against instructions/orders/rules? Once each student had a chance to respond, they were given a group task with which to build the tallest structure with given blocks in only six minutes. During the group collaboration and building of the structure, observers were looking for the following characteristics: Assertive, Ambitious, Anxious, Impulsive, Talkative, Quiet, Gregarious, Leader, Competitive, Timid, Comedian, Creative, Helper and Well-Dressed. At the end of six minutes, time was called. Next, the group was divided into pairs and were told to build a bridge in five minutes with their partner.



- **Investigation:** Matching student passion with course goals and community needs
- **Preparation:** Getting ready for service through learning
- **Action:** Service – Direct, Indirect, Advocacy or Research
- **Reflection:** Making meaning of the service and learning
- **Demonstration:** Celebration of action and impact of service-learning
- **Evaluation:** Assessing the learning and impact on community



Again, the observers were documenting signs of the same traits. At the end of five minutes, the pairs came back together as a whole group and engaged in a debrief. While these exercises were valuable to the Discovery Park staff for their purposes, they were also early stages of goal setting, team building, communication and cooperation for the students involved. They were going to be working with others and teamwork and the other skills would be important for everyone.

After a meeting and discussion with the staff at Discovery Park, possible placements were discussed for each student based on their career choices, interests and abilities for positions at Discovery Park. The assignments were recommended by the Discovery Park staff and the course instructor based upon the earlier activities and the interests of the individual students that had been collected. Some of the students were easily assigned based on their majors. For example, the Wildlife Science, Animal Science, and Veterinary students were assigned to work with animals at the park. Once the recommendations were presented to the students and community partner, contracts were signed by Discovery Park, Student and Instructor (Sample Contract in Appendix 1). In addition, Students were asked to complete a pre-service survey which measured preconceptions of students regarding the project. The survey contained 22 statements to which students responded on a Likert Scale ranging from Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Not Sure, Strongly Agree to Agree.

Next, students discussed the specific types of reflections and assessments they would complete at midterm and for the final grade. Instructor gave some ideas but allowed student voice and choice in the assessment and reflections. They decided to complete reflections after each 10 hours of service using [www.edomodo.com](http://www.edomodo.com), an educational technology in which students can blog and reflect on their service. Students were given “What”, “So What”, and “Now What” questions for each reflection. “What?”, “So What?”, and “Now What?” is a frequently utilized process for reflection activities (Figure 1).

## Pre-service Survey

- 1) The community service aspect of this course will help me to see how the subject matter I learn can be used in everyday life.
- 2) The community service I will do through this course will help me to better understand the lectures and readings in this course.
- 3) I feel I will learn more from this course if more time is spent in the classroom instead of the community.
- 4) The idea of combining service in the community with university coursework should be practiced in more classes at this university.
- 5) I was already volunteering in my community before taking this service-learning course.
- 6) I feel that the community service I will do through this course will benefit the community.
- 7) I probably won't volunteer or participate in the community after this course.
- 8) The community service involved in this course will help me to become more aware of the needs in my community.
- 9) My interactions with the community partner will enhance my learning in this course.
- 10) I have a responsibility to serve my community.
- 11) Performing service in the community will help me clarify my career path.
- 12) The community service in this class will enhance my relationship with my professor.
- 13) The work I will accomplish in this course will make me more marketable in my chosen profession when I graduate.
- 14) The community service involved in this course will make me more aware of my own biases and prejudices.
- 15) The service I will perform in the community will enhance my ability to communicate in a “real world” setting.
- 16) The community service aspect of this course will help me to develop my problem-solving skills.
- 17) Most people can make a difference in their community.
- 18) This service-learning course helped become more comfortable working with people different from myself.
- 19) The community service I performed in this course helped me learn how to plan and complete a project.
- 20) Participating in the community helped me enhance my leadership skills.
- 21) I can make a difference in my community.
- 22) I would like to enroll in additional service-learning courses at UTM.

*\* The results of the survey are attached at the end of the article (Appendix 2).*

**Figure 1 Reflection**



“Using this structure, you start with your central event (the ‘what?’), and then explain the importance or value to your audience (the ‘so what?’), before concluding with the next steps (the ‘now what?’). Peers were allowed to make comments on one another’s reflections. It was decided at midterm, all students would present an Infographic updating the class with the what, where, how and why of their service-learning project. Lastly, it was the students’ decision to complete a Padlet presentation to showcase their experiences at the end of the thirty hours. Padlet ([www.padlet.com](http://www.padlet.com)) is a free package that allows the user to easily create a presentation, usually with one click, copy/paste or drag and drop. It supports almost every type of file from spreadsheets to selfies to Spotify. All reflections and assessments were developed and evaluated by rubrics that were co-created by the students and instructor. The Instructor requirements included a post-conception survey, community partner student evaluations, time sheet documenting time and rubric scores from reflections, Infographic and Padlet. The post-conception survey is included at the end of the article.

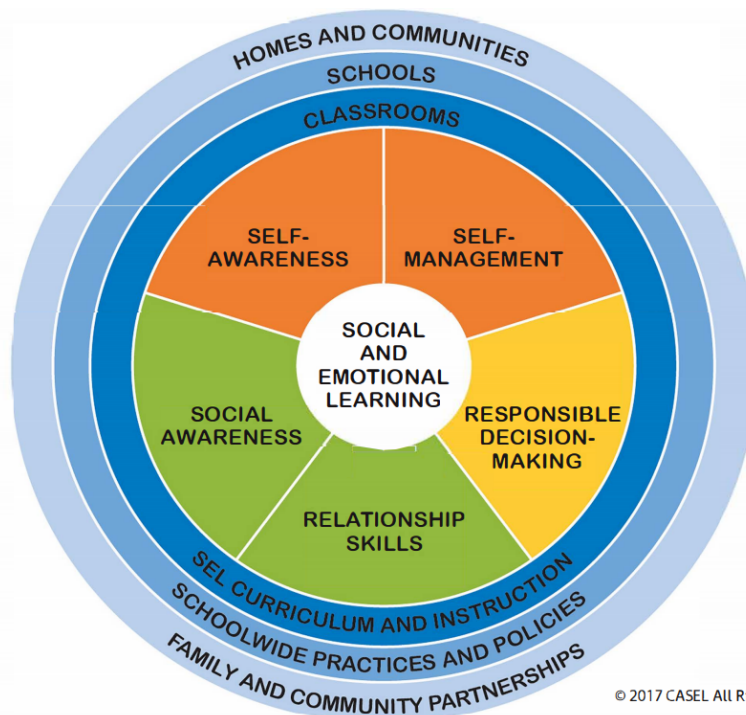
## Journal Reflections

Upon review of the reflections posted at 10, 20 and 30 hours, the following information emerged as distinctive topics: Self-Awareness; Self-Management, Responsible Decision Making, Relationship Skills and Social Awareness. Interestingly, these are the five core competencies outlined by CASEL (the Collaborative for Academic Social & Emotional Learning (2005) which increase students’ ability to bring together skills, attitudes, and behaviors in order to deal compassionately and effectively with daily tasks and challenges. These are skills the students needed for the service-learning project but will also use in the careers and in dealings with others throughout their lives. Below are some examples of student reflections categorized into the five core competencies.

### Self-Awareness

*I also learned a lot about myself while*

## CASEL: Five Core Competencies of Reflection



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*doing my clinicals, which is my service-learning project. I learned that I love staying busy and on my feet.*

*I have also gained confidence in myself and my abilities and I have experienced breakthroughs that would not have happened if I had given up or stopped*

*More often then not, the tasks we have in life are not always the most exciting or glamorous, yet they can still carry importance. And to persevere through it all, you need to be dedicated to see it through.*

*Overall, these 30 hours have definitely made me appreciate my strengths and flaws, and have allowed me to work on these to better myself.*

### Self-Management

*I have learned new meanings to how the park is set up and have been involved with so many group activities that I actually feel like I am an employee. I have been able to help people and children know more about the park and the exhibits because I am so fascinated by it that I have already researched a lot of the exhibits to find new information to keep people interested and entertained! You could walk through Discovery Park in 2 hours and not learn a thing.*

*I learned that I'm very much a perfectionist, which isn't a great thing to be when working with animals because nothing is ever going to be 100% clean (another thing I've learned).*

*I have recently finished the first 10 hours of service learning. I have helped the people at Discovery Park by watching the kids that are looking at the different exhibits and playing on the playground. I have discovered that I learned a few more personal skills as well as polished the ones that I already have. I learned that I love people, but sometimes I need a break from constantly carrying a conversation with a stranger. I also learned that people like to be approached with a smile and a question if you are to have a conversation with him. So far it has been an awesome time!!! I'm looking forward to my next 20 hours!!!*

*I achieved the goals that I had set for myself and I have grown more than I thought I would.*

### Social Awareness

*While the job wasn't the most entertaining in the world, the sense of accomplishment I got from helping out others made up for it.*



*It's all a team effort. When there is a task in front of us, we all communicate with each other before we begin. Especially in the field of grounds keeping, properly teaming up on the work is the only way to make a facility as large as DPA run smoothly.*

*I have developed better people skills and feel like I have a better sense of sympathy towards people of all kinds.*

### **Relationship Skills**

*From helping with pottery classes to dressing up as a princess I have learned new skills how to deal and treat with customers and children. I have also been put in a position where I have to work with co-worker. Instead of feeling like I am shadowing someone I truly feel I am an employee. I am trusted to do things on my own and carry out tasks that an employee would do.*

*I also learned that I really like the people that work in the back with me because they love animals too and they're great people who are easy to talk to and joke around with. Overall I've really enjoyed working at DPA and I look forward to next Monday.*

### **Responsible Decision Making**

*I love figuring out how to finish a task or how to solve a problem. Many of the people that I worked with did not seem so thrilled with having to solve problems. Some people seemed to get very stressed about how busy we were but I loved it.*

*The first 10 hours of my service-learning project taught me about myself more than anything. I spent the largest majority of my time inside trying to redesign an archival storage room that consisted of many filing cabinets, deed books, and other history books.*

*A new skill I have acquired through my experience so far would have to be time management. I cannot wait to see what I learn with the rest of my service learning*

*During class, Social & Emotional Learning competencies were not discussed. However, those five competencies were greatly enhanced through time spent during engagement*

*with Discovery Park and the service-learning project. It is important to note, on the Service-Learning Contract, students were asked to list Responsibilities to the Community and Personal Learning Objectives. These objectives ranged from communication skills, organization skills, self-motivation, integrity of work, time management, learn more about future career options, develop social skills, broaden my abilities and interests, help the community in ways that promote their mission, and learn how to adapt with views different from my own.*

## **Community Agency Evaluation of Student – Student Performance**

Each student was assigned a Supervisor with their service-learning project. The Supervisor completed a Student Performance Evaluation upon reaching 30 hours. The following areas were assessed on 5-point Likert Scale ranging from Outstanding, High Average, Average, Weak and Poor.

- Relationship with Others
- Communication Skills
- Attitude & Initiative
- Performance
- Application of Skills & Knowledge

### **Positive Comments from Supervisors**

*Student shows a willingness to help others and shows interest in disease processes.*

*Did everything I asked, good job!*

*Gave us a laugh when we needed it, great worker!*

*She has great enthusiasm and follows instructions when given. She was great to work with!*

*Always eager and ready to learn new information!*

*He completed his assigned tasks in a professional manner. He was polite & professional when meeting clients. He also conducted himself in a professional manner with co-workers.*

*She is eager to learn and be part of the team.*

*Listens well and assists staff any way she can*

*She is dependable and is able to speak with others without hesitation*

*She is an enthusiastic and hardworking individual who I believe will excel at any job that she undertakes. I would love to see more people like her!*

*Very bright, engaging and personable*

### **Negative Comments from Supervisors**

*His attitude reflected that he was not interested in service-learning and that he was here because it was required.*

*Not always completely honest on time sheet.*

It was interesting to read the Supervisors comments which centered around SEL skills more than how much was done or accomplished. The 'soft' skills seem to be more important to a Supervisor than getting the work done. Skills such as enthusiasm, dependability, eagerness, willingness, engagement and hard work were alluded to in comments made by the Supervisors often. On the other hand, the negative comments from one Supervisor also centered around SEL skills rather than work skills – poor attitude & dishonesty. This speaks highly to the use of Service-Learning in developing those skills which employers deem critical to success in the job market.

## **Pre/Post Survey Results on Perceptions of the Impact of Service-Learning**

Utilizing a survey (Appendix 2) developed by Campus Compact (Compact.org), students were surveyed at the very beginning of the course and at the end to identify significant changes in perceptions of the impact of service-learning. Conducting a factor analysis on student's responses showed significant difference from pre to post survey in the areas of subject matter integration, community engagement, relationship building, real world appreciation and Social & Emotional competencies.



I always liked the idea of specializing in exotics when I go to vet school but after this service-learning project, I've learned I definitely want to work with exotic animals and possibly work for a zoo or park like Discovery Park of America

ways liked the idea of specializing in exotics when I go to vet school but after this service-learning project, I've learned I definitely want to work with exotic animals and possibly work for a zoo or park like Discovery Park of America

Subject-matter integration



"I learned a lot during the duration of my service-learning. The thing I will keep with me the most is the sense of accomplishment I get from helping others."

"This service-learning project has contributed to my knowledge about the animal anatomy as well as different types of diseases. My plan to become a veterinarian has also be encouraged and motivated

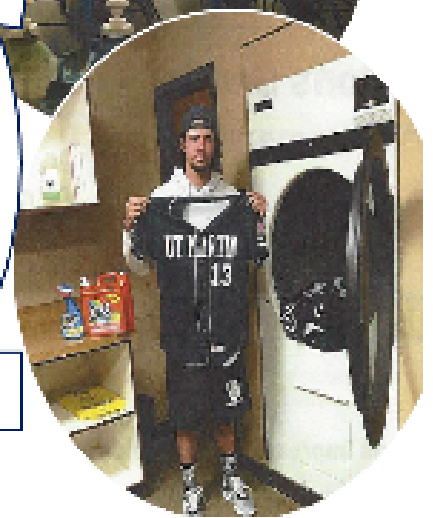
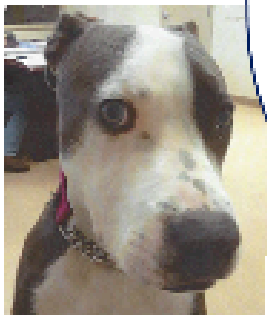
"I learned you have to speak to kids and adults in different ways for them to pay attention to what you are saying. I also learned how to start conversations with each generation of huge

Community Engagement

Social & Emotional Competencies

"The two guys I worked under are both great mentors and work extremely hard at what they do. It was enjoyable to be able to take some of the weight off their shoulders and help them with their jobs."

Real World Application



## Conclusion

What a treat to watch these young people learn and grow from their experiences with Service-Learning. One course aim and outcome for this class was to 'Realize that their lives can make a difference!' The students' reflections support their recognition that they did make a difference for the staff and guests of Discovery Park. Even

more importantly, the students understood that the intentional service experiences that aligned with the course objectives and goals not only met the course goals for their learning but helped them grow as individuals and both as future members of the workforce and productive American citizens.

We believe the experiences can educate responsible citizens for careers,

professions, service and well-being. Student perceptions on the impact of service learning was significant in areas noted. It is in purposeful engagement with learners in direct experiences and focused reflection that increases in knowledge, skills, clarifying of values, and developing capacity to contribute to community needs.

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## Appendix 1

HONORS200

Service-Learning Agreement

February 14 -April 25

This form should be completed after your interview with your site supervisor. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student# \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/e mail \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Agency/Project \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/email \_\_\_\_\_

Your Primary Service Deliverables

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Your Primary Learning Objectives

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Your Primary Responsibilities and Duties

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

### READ CAREFULLY

As a service learner, you are given the opportunity for a unique and valuable experience. To undertake in this assignment as a representative of the University of Tennessee at Martin, your instructor and yourself, you must agree to

- Fulfill your agreement as to your duties, hours and responsibilities to the best of your ability.
- Be professional -- punctual, polite, and respectful of agencies' policies, rules and regulations.
- Respect the confidentiality of clients of the agency.
- Give notification in advance if you must miss or be late for an agency appointment. If advance notification is impossible, call as soon as possible thereafter.

I have read and agree to the agreement and the guidelines as outlined above.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the agreement and agree to supervise or provide supervision for the student above.

Agency Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the agreement and agree to provide consultation to the site supervisor and academic supervision to the student.

Faculty Advisor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 2** Pre/Post Survey Results on Perceptions of the Impact of Service-Learning (Developed by Compact.org)

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not Sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
The community service aspect of this course helped me to see how the subject matter I will learn can be used in everyday life.	0	0	0	1	4	0	9	7	7	11
I feel I would have learned more from this course if more time is spent in the classroom instead of in the community.	6	7	7	8	5	3	2	0	0	1
The idea of combining service in the community with university coursework should be practiced in more classes at this university.	0	0	0	1	5	3	5	9	10	7
I was already volunteering in my community before taking this service-learning course.	0	2	10	2	0	0	2	10	8	5
I feel that the community service I did through this course will benefit the community.	2	0	1	0	4	4	7	10	6	4
I probably won't volunteer or participate in the community after this course.	8	9	4	9	3	1	4	0	1	1
The community service involved in this course helped me to become more aware of the needs in my community.	2	1	0	1	5	5	9	6	4	8
My interactions with the community partner enhanced my learning in this course.	0	0	1	1	3	0	7	10	9	9
I have a responsibility to serve my community.	0	0	0	1	3	1	10	7	7	10
Performing service in the community helped me clarify my career path	2	2	6	2	3	4	4	7	5	5
The community service in this class enhanced my relationship with my professor.	1	1	4	0	5	1	5	8	5	9
The work I will accomplish in this course has made me more marketable in my chosen profession when I graduate.	1	1	0	1	2	2	5	8	12	7
The community service involved in this course has made me more aware of my own biases and prejudices.	1	2	2	2	2	2	8	7	7	6
The service I will performed in the community enhanced my ability to communicate in a "real world" setting.	1	1	0	0	3	1	10	8	6	9
The community service aspect of this course helped me to develop my problem-solving skills.	0	1	0	0	7	1	7	9	6	8
Most people can make a difference in their community.	0	0	0	0	0	3	12	7	7	10
This service-learning course helped become more comfortable working with people different from myself.	0	1	0	0	2	2	9	6	9	19
The community service I performed in this course helped me learn how to plan and complete a project.	0	1	0	0	5	2	10	9	5	7
Participating in the community helped me enhance my leadership skills.	0	1	0	1	4	3	10	7	6	7
I can make a difference in my community.	0	0	0	0	3	0	9	7	8	11
I would like to enroll in additional service-learning courses at UTM.	0	3	7	3	7	6	6	4	0	4

Terry A Silver, Ed.D., is an Associate Professor of Educational Studies at the University of Tennessee at Martin, and a Certified Service-Learning Trainer.

Chip Harris, Ed.D., is an Educational Consultant, the former Director of the Center for Career and Technical Education at Tennessee State University (Retired), and is a Certified Service-Learning Trainer

# *A Call for Papers for Serve InDEED*

Submissions accepted for publication in the following categories:

- Reflective Essays
- Research Based Articles
- Best Practices

***We seek to share ideas within all communities of service learning.***

## **Goals of Serve InDEED, the Tennessee Journal for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement:**

1. Share ideas and/or resources in order to bring together all communities under the umbrella of service.
2. Learn from one another regardless of rank or position, non-profit, faith-based, K-12 or Higher Education, volunteerism or service-learning.
3. Include students (K-16) as important contributors to the body of research in service-learning.
4. Share reflective experiences which foster dynamic change in beliefs, biases, and judgments in order to move us toward a more peaceful society.
5. Contribute to the growing body of academic research in service-learning, civic engagement and volunteerism.

## **Manuscript Submission Process:**

The journal follows a blind review process outline below:

1. Submission of article in APA formatting, Ariel, 11 pt. font, double-space, 5-12 pages should be sent to the editors at **Journal.Serveindeed@gmail.com**. Include in the subject box of the email the Word Submission and the category for which you want to be considered. The categories are listed below.
2. Include one page abstract due with the article.
3. Submit paper with Title page including author(s) contact information (title, organization, and email address or phone number).
4. Do not include names in the manuscript. Articles that are under review by another publication should not be submitted.
5. Place figures, tables and/or graphics at end of text and include where it will be placed in manuscript.
6. At the end of the manuscript, please include References in APA style.
7. The manuscript will be sent to the blind reviewers for consideration. Authors will be notified by editors upon submission.
8. The review process will normally take 6-8 weeks. Manuscript responses may include acceptance, acceptance with revisions, acceptance for later publication or not in line with goals of journal.

## **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

This journal seeks submissions from any of the following:

*In the subject line of the email, indicate which type of article you are submitting from the following list:*

- K-12 Service-Learning
- Higher Education Service-Learning
- Community Partnerships in service
- Community-based organizations in service
  - Non-profit organizations in service
  - Faith-based organization in service
  - The arts and service
- Government agencies involved in service endeavors
  - Reflective essay
  - Research-based issue
  - Best Practice
- Social and Emotional Learning
  - Community Building Project
  - Volunteerism
- Service-Learning Pedagogy

## **\* Student Submissions:**

***The Journal welcomes submissions from K-16 students involved in service-learning and volunteerism.***

You may email your submissions to: [Journal.Serveindeed@gmail.com](mailto:Journal.Serveindeed@gmail.com)